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THE COURT AND CABINETS

OF

GEORGE THE THIRD.

—

VOL. I.

266.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT AND CABINETS

OF

GEORGE THE THIRD.

FROM ORIGINAL FAMILY DOCUMENTS.

BY

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS,
K.G.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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INTRODUCTION.

In the selection and arrangement of the Correspondence contained in these Volumes, the intrusion of unnecessary commentaries and political opinions has been carefully avoided. The letters themselves are so lucid and complete, that the interest of the publication has been left to rest upon their details as far as possible. But as a collection of communications of this confidential nature, written from day to day upon passing events, must necessarily involve numerous allusions which, intelligible at the time, are either obscure or liable to misapprehension now, occasional notices of the principal topics and circumstances referred to have been introduced wherever they appeared to be required. By the help of this illustrative frame-work a certain degree of continuity has been attempted to be preserved, so that the reader will have no difficulty in blending these materials into the history of the period they embrace.

The occurrences of that period were momentous in their origin and their consequences; and amongst the prominent

1786.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE JOINS MR. PITT'S ADMINISTRATION . 312—318

1787.

THE DAWN OF FREE TRADE—THE ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES—AFFAIRS OF HOLLAND—ARTHUR WELLESLEY—THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM ASSUMES THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND FOR THE SECOND TIME . 319—339

1788.

IRISH CORRESPONDENCE—THE INDIA DECLARATORY BILL—TRIAL OF WARREN HASTINGS—CONTEMPLATED CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION—THE KING'S INTERFERENCE IN MILITARY APPOINTMENTS—THE IRISH CHANCELLORSHIP—THE KING'S ILLNESS—VIEWS OF THE CABINET RESPECTING THE REGENCY . . . . . 340—457

ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. I.

PORTRAIT OF THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM . . . *Frontispiece.*

VOL. II.

PORTRAIT OF LORD GRENVILLE . . . *Frontispiece.*

COURT AND CABINETS

OF

GEORGE III.

1782.

THE CLOSE OF LORD NORTH'S ADMINISTRATION—THE SECOND ROCKINGHAM CABINET—MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE'S MISSION TO PARIS—THE SHELBURNE ADMINISTRATION—LORD TEMPLE APPOINTED LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND—IRISH AFFAIRS.

As no inconsiderable portion of the Correspondence contained in these volumes relates to the structure and conduct of Cabinets, throwing light upon public affairs from those secret recesses to which historians rarely have access, it may be useful, by way of introduction, to glance at certain circumstances which, during the period embraced in the work, exercised a special influence over the Government of the country: an influence no less directly felt in the councils of Ministers than in the measures and combinations of the Opposition.

The history of Administration in the reign of George III. presents some peculiarities which distinguish it in a very striking degree from that of most other reigns. The key

to these peculiarities will be found in the personal character of the Sovereign. To that character, and its immediate action upon political parties, may be traced, to a greater extent than has been hitherto suspected, the parliamentary agitation and ministerial difficulties which were spread over nearly the whole of that long and eventful period. The means of forming an accurate judgment on matters of this nature exist only in confidential details, such as are disclosed in the collection of letters now for the first time laid before the public. In order, however, to render intelligible the allusions that are scattered through them, and to point out their real value as materials for the political history of the time, it is necessary to offer a few preliminary remarks on the circumstances to which reference has been made.

George III.—whose admirable business habits and inflexible integrity inspired the highest deference and attachment amongst the personal friends he admitted to his confidence—was remarkable in no one particular more than in his jealousy of the prerogatives of the Crown. He carried his zeal in that matter so far as even to draw upon himself the charge of desiring to strain the rights of the Crown beyond constitutional limitations. But as these limitations have never been accurately defined, and as it has always been difficult to prescribe the precise privileges which would relieve the Sovereign, on the one hand, from being a mere state puppet, without giving him, on the other, too great a preponderance of executive power, we need not discuss the justice of an imputation which refers to the general complexion of the King's views rather than

to any particular acts of arbitrary authority. That it was the great aim of His Majesty's life to preserve the royal prerogatives from encroachment is undeniable; but it should be remembered that when George III. ascended the throne, the relative powers and responsibilities of the Sovereign and his advisers were not so clearly marked or so well understood as they are at present; and if His Majesty's jealousy of the rights which he believed to be vested in his person led him to trespass upon the independence of his servants, or to resist what he considered the extreme demands of the Parliament, it was an error against the excesses of which our Constitution affords the easiest and simplest means of redress.

Intimately conversant with official routine, and thoroughly master of the details of every department of the Government, he acquired a familiar knowledge of all the appointments in the gift of the Ministry, and reserved to himself the right of controlling them. Nor was this monopoly of patronage confined to offices of importance or considerable emolument; it descended even to commissions in the army, and the disposal of small places which custom as well as expediency had delegated to the heads of those branches of service to which they belonged. His Majesty's pertinacity on these points frequently precipitated painful embarrassments of a personal nature, entailed much disagreeable correspondence, and sometimes produced misunderstandings and alienations of far greater moment than the paltry considerations in which they originated. Amongst the numerous instances in which His Majesty insisted on the preservation of patronage in his own

hands, one of the most conspicuous was his stipulation with the Marquis of Rockingham for unconditional power over the nomination of the household, at a moment when the exigency of public affairs compelled him to surrender other points of infinitely greater importance. We shall find in the course of the following letters that His Majesty's desire to advance the interests of particular individuals interfered seriously, on some occasions, with the convenience of the public service.

The same spirit guided His Majesty's conduct, as far as the forms of the Constitution would permit, in his choice of Ministers. He had strong personal likings and antipathies, and rather than consent to have a Ministry imposed upon him consisting of men he disapproved, he would have suffered any amount of difficulty or inconvenience. He prevailed upon Lord North to remain in office three years in the face of sinking majorities, and against his Lordship's own wishes, for the sole purpose of keeping out the Whigs, whom he regarded with a feeling of the bitterest aversion. Good reasons, no doubt, might be suggested for this passionate abhorrence of the Whigs, who, independently of party antecedents, had given His Majesty much cause of uneasiness, by their strenuous opposition to the measures of his favourite Ministers, and by their alliance with his son. So deeply was this feeling rooted in His Majesty's mind, that when a junction with that party seemed to be all but inevitable in March, 1778, he threatened to abdicate rather than be "trampled on by his enemies." Four years afterwards he explicitly repeated the same threat

under the excitement of an adverse division ; and it was supposed by those who were best acquainted with the firmness of his resolution that, had he been forced to extremities, he would have carried his menace into execution.

His conduct to his Ministers was equally steadfast where he bestowed his confidence, and stubborn where he withheld it. There were certain questions upon which he was known to be inexorable, and upon which it was useless to attempt to move him. Of these the most prominent were the American War, Catholic Emancipation, and Parliamentary Reform. Whether his judgment was right or wrong on these questions, it was fixed and unalterable ; and the Ministers who took office under George III. knew beforehand the conditions of their service, so far as these paramount articles of faith were concerned. It was the knowledge of this rigorous trait in His Majesty's character, that made the Marquis of Rockingham insist upon submitting to the King a programme of the policy he intended to pursue before he would consent to enter upon the Government in 1782. His Majesty desired nothing more than a list of the persons Lord Rockingham wished to propose for the Cabinet; but Lord Rockingham thought that something more was necessary to his own security and independence. He considered that when a statesman undertakes the duties of Administration, he assumes a responsibility irrespective of the Sovereign, and that his duty requires of him that he shall lay before His Majesty, in the first instance, as the basis of negotiation, an outline of the measures by which alone he can conduct the affairs of the kingdom with honour and success. In the adoption

of this clear and candid line of procedure there was no coercion on the Sovereign, who was free to accept or reject the propositions, while the constitutional principle at stake was acknowledged and vindicated on both sides.

His Majesty's immobility on certain questions had the practical effect of literally placing them in abeyance in the councils of his Ministers. As it was found to be impossible to form a strong Administration that should unanimously agree with His Majesty, and at the same time possess the confidence of the country, no alternative remained but to enter into a tacit arrangement, by which those questions were to be dropped out of the list of what were called Cabinet measures, each Minister being left at liberty to vote upon them as he pleased, without being held to have compromised the opinions of the Government. Had it not been for such an arrangement as this, Pitt, who was pledged to the relief of the Catholics from their disabilities, could never have held office under George III. And thus was introduced into the practice of Administration a principle which is undoubtedly a violation of its theory, and which, taking advantage of a dangerous precedent, has been acted upon since with less justification.

In the invention of this escape for the conscience of the King through the side vent of "open questions," the direct influence of the Sovereign upon the councils of the Administration may be clearly traced. There were no other means of reconciling His Majesty to the appointment of a Cabinet, demanded by the voice of the Parliament and the country. The dilemma was obvious. There was no choice between the rejection of Ministers who held

certain doctrines adverse to His Majesty's convictions, and compromise upon the points of difference. When it was found impossible to conduct the Government of the kingdom with a Cabinet that did not possess the popular confidence, the Sovereign was reduced to the necessity of treating with men who did possess that confidence, whether he agreed with them in opinion or not. In our own times, and under most of the Sovereigns who have filled the throne since our Constitution may be said to have been settled, there could be no great difficulty in a case of this kind. Ministers undertaking office under such circumstances would be responsible to the country for their policy, and the Sovereign would feel himself at once relieved by that responsibility from all further anxiety. But George III. took that responsibility upon himself in reference to the great measures that occupied the public mind; and when, by the exigency of circumstances, Ministers were pressed upon him from whose views he dissented, he accepted them upon conditions which restrained the action of the Cabinet, as a whole, in certain directions, but left its members individually free and unpledged. Such was the origin of "open questions." It was a compromise on both sides; and of course it must always depend upon the extent to which this compromise is carried, and the necessity under which it is resorted to, whether it should be regarded as a sacrifice of principle on the part of the Minister who submits to it.

Another novelty originating in this reign, out of the same peculiar state of things, and resting upon a similar theory of expediency, was that of the formation of a

Coalition Administration, in which party differences were merged in a common agreement upon a general line of policy. As considerable light is thrown upon this memorable incident in the course of these volumes, it is unnecessary to dwell upon it here. It will be abundantly elucidated in the proper place. For the present, it is sufficient to refer to the junction, in a composite Ministry of hostile statesman, as one of the singular results flowing from that necessity of adaptation to circumstances which was rendered unavoidable by the unyielding character of the Sovereign.

There were other circumstances which, combined with the personal dispositions of the King, led to the strenuous assertion in this reign of the prerogatives of the Executive against the interference and control of the aristocracy and the Parliament. From the date of the Revolution up to the accession of George III., the independent authority of the Crown can scarcely be said to have had any practical force—scarcely, indeed, to have had any existence. The Government of the country was essentially Parliamentary. It was part of the compact with William III. A foreign dynasty had been established, and the people naturally looked to the protection of their domestic interests against the possible preponderance of extrinsic sympathies in the reigning power. Under William III., the claim of the United Provinces upon the special regard of the Sovereign was the object of national jealousy; and when the House of Brunswick ascended the throne, popular vigilance was transferred to Hanover. The first two Princes of that House who ruled in England scarcely spoke our language, and were so ignorant of our Constitution and our customs,

that they could not be admitted with safety to an active participation in the Government. The Whigs, who had brought about these changes, preserved in their own hands the entire authority of the State. The Sovereign was merely the motionless representative of the monarchical principle. But George III. was not an alien. Born in the country, educated in its language and its usages, and inspired by an ardent devotion to Protestantism, he entered life under auspices that attracted at once towards the Crown an amount of popularity which it had never enjoyed under his predecessors. The qualities and dispositions of the King were favourable to the cultivation of these opportunities. Without being profoundly versed in the philosophy of character, he possessed a remarkable aptitude in the discrimination of persons suited to his purposes. He had considerable skill (to which Lord Shelburne bears special testimony) in extracting the opinions of others, and turning the results to account. If his mind was not vigorous and original, it was active and adaptive, inquisitive and watchful. If his judgment was not always sound, his convictions were strong, and the tenacity of his resolution commanded submission. An accomplished linguist, fond of business, and having some talents as a writer, which enabled him to express his meaning with facility and clearness, he was well qualified to avail himself of the political accidents which contributed to revive and strengthen the royal prerogative.

The Whigs themselves helped mainly to bring about this struggle between the Crown and the Parliament, or rather between the Crown and the "great families," to

use Mr. Canning's phrase, who had hitherto absorbed the power and patronage of the State. United in principle, they were divided by personal jealousies. The long possession of office had given a sort of impunity to their pretensions; and believing that they held a perpetual tenure of Administration, they were weak enough, at every new ministerial change, to contend amongst themselves for the prizes. These internal dissensions weakened and scattered them, and prepared the way for those experiments which were made, during the early years of George III., to conduct the Government without their aid.

The effects were felt in an entire change of system. The accession of George III. was followed by a *coup-d'état*, which displaced the able Cabinet that had been organized by the elder Pitt, to make room for the Earl of Bute, who had the credit of being the author of the scheme, and who was utterly incapable of carrying it out. Independently of his want of the requisite qualifications as a statesman, there were other objections of a private nature to Lord Bute, which rendered it impossible that he could ostensibly continue to guide the councils of the Ministry, however he might be permitted, or retained, to influence them from behind the curtain. But his short essay at Government had sufficiently disturbed the *ancien régime*, to leave in the King's hands the power of choosing his Ministers without reference to popular clamour or the will of Parliament. The consequence was, a rapid series of Ministerial mutations, throughout which the contest for power was maintained on both sides with so fierce a spirit, that

during the first ten years of the reign of George III., there were no less than seven successive Administrations.

It was not till Lord North was called to the head of the Ministry, in 1770, that the public uneasiness was allayed, and a Cabinet of the King's own choice was founded in security. Lord North was an especial favourite with the King, whose extraordinary regard for him originated in the promptitude with which he responded to His Majesty's appeal, at a moment of serious embarrassment, when the Duke of Grafton unexpectedly threw up the Government, and Lord North consented to undertake it. "I love you as a man of worth, as I esteem you as a Minister," writes the King to him on one occasion; "your conduct at a critical moment I can never forget." The Whigs were readily reconciled to Lord North's appointment, because he was not mixed up in their differences. They preferred a Minister who had no alliances amongst them to one of themselves, whose elevation would have produced discontents in the camp. At first there was a show of dissatisfaction, and some attempts were made to foment the popular passions; but the dignified firmness of the Sovereign, and the moderate bearing of the favourite, speedily tranquillized the public mind, and enabled Lord North to carry on the Government with energy and success.

In his private character, Lord North was irreproachable; as a debater, he displayed some valuable qualities—patience and endurance, facility of resources on occasions of emergency, great calmness and courage, and a playful wit, which never startled by its brilliancy, but seldom failed of

its point. He betrayed no ostentation or vainglory in his position; never offended by any undue exhibition of the powers he wielded; and restricted himself severely to the discharge of his duties as an adviser of the Crown, deprecating the title of Prime Minister, which he declared was an office unknown to the Constitution of this country. As a statesman, he never achieved a high or distinguished reputation. The American war was the blot upon his career; nor can even his devotion to the Sovereign entirely excuse him for remaining in office at His Majesty's entreaty to pursue a course of colonial policy which his reason and his conscience disapproved. This was a political fault, which no circumstances can palliate. Others have done worse, no doubt, from meaner motives; but the mere desire of serving the King does not absolve the Minister from censure for having acted contrary to his own convictions on a question of such grave importance.

Lord North continued to retain the royal favour until he entered into the coalition with the Whigs. This was a step the King could not forgive. No extremity could reconcile him to a measure so repulsive to his feelings. Yet the coalition, after all, was more discreditable to the Whigs than to Lord North, who may be pardoned for accepting it as a tribute to his personal weight, and a recantation, in some sort, of all the odium the Whigs had industriously heaped upon him during the whole period of his Administration. If they really believed him to be the base and dangerous person they had all along described him to be, the shame was theirs for consenting to associate

themselves with him, and to work under him in the Government.

The Administration of Lord North lasted for twelve years—from 1770 to 1782. The most important consequence it effected, so far as political parties were concerned, was to throw the Whigs into opposition, and to draw the Tories into closer relations with the throne. This complete exchange of position exactly suited the principles of the two great factions; the loyalty and courtly aspirations of the Tories (now that all hope of restoring the Stuarts was at an end) rendering them highly acceptable in the councils of the monarch, while the popular doctrines of the Whigs pointed to the benches of the Opposition as the appropriate place for a party which is always more usefully employed in representing the people than in exercising the functions of Government. Sixty years elapsed before the Whigs recovered the ground which they had lost under the Ministry of Lord North.

The American war—for the management of which the severest reproaches were cast upon the Government—the state of Ireland, and Parliamentary Reform, were the principal public questions that agitated the term of Lord North's Administration. Amongst the Whigs who took a prominent part in these proceedings were the Grenvilles. Connected by marriage with the Pitt family, and distinguished by their own hereditary claims and high talents, they exerted as conspicuous an influence out of office as they had previously done when they had the reins of Government in their hands. It will be necessary to retrace briefly the political heraldry of the Grenvilles for

the purpose of bringing the reader acquainted with the character of the three brothers whose intimate correspondence forms the substance of these volumes.

Richard Grenville succeeded his brother in the Earldom of Temple in 1752, and took an active part in the Administration of the elder Pitt (Lord Chatham), who was married to his sister, Lady Hesther, the mother of the "Great Commoner." He resigned office with Pitt in 1761, on the question of the war with Spain. This circumstance estranged him from his political connection with his only brother, George Grenville, who remained in office under Lord Bute, as Treasurer of the Navy. Lord Temple, espousing the cause of Wilkes (for which he was dismissed from his Lieutenancy of the county of Bucks) continued in opposition till he was finally reconciled to his brother in 1765. He afterwards had a serious difference with Pitt on the formation of the Cabinet in 1766; but a reconciliation having been effected between them in 1768, they subsequently acted in concert except upon the taxation of America, Lord Temple invariably supporting the policy of his brother and the Stamp Act.

George Grenville had been educated for the bar, and entered Parliament for the borough of Buckingham at the instance of his uncle, Lord Cobham; joined the Administration in 1744, as a Lord of the Admiralty, afterwards as a Lord of the Treasury, then as Treasurer of the Navy, and continued in office at intervals till 1762, when, separating himself from Lord Temple and Mr. Pitt, he joined Lord Bute as Secretary of State. On the resig-

nation of Lord Bute in 1763, he became First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, remaining at the head of the Cabinet till his dismissal in 1765, after which he never again accepted office.

He left three sons, George, Thomas, and William Wyndham, who variously distinguished themselves in the public service, and whose letters, chiefly those of the last, in all respects the ablest and most celebrated, constitute the bulk of the following pages.

George Grenville succeeded to the title of Earl Temple on the death of his uncle, and was afterwards created Marquis of Buckingham, and was father of the late Duke of Buckingham. He twice filled the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

Thomas Grenville, who died recently at an advanced age, filled several high offices in the State, and accumulated one of the most splendid libraries in the kingdom.

William Wyndham Grenville, afterwards Lord Grenville, was one of the most eminent statesmen of the reign of George III., and, surviving all his great contemporaries, died in 1834. "The endowments of his mind," observes Lord Brougham, "were all of a useful and commanding sort—sound sense, steady memory, vast industry. His acquirements were in the same proportion valuable and lasting—a thorough acquaintance with business in its principles and in its details; a complete mastery of the science of politics as well theoretical as practical; of late years a perfect familiarity with political economy, and a just appreciation of its importance; an early and most extensive knowledge of classical literature, which he im-

proved instead of abandoning, down to the close of his life; a taste formed upon these chaste models, and of which his lighter compositions, his Greek and Latin verses, bore testimony to the last. His eloquence was of a plain, masculine, authoritative cast, which neglected if it did not despise ornament, and partook in the least possible degree of fancy, while its declamation was often equally powerful with its reasoning and its statement. He was in this greatest quality of a statesman pre-eminently distinguished, that, as he neither would yield up his judgment to the clamour of the people, nor suffer himself to be seduced by the influence of the Court, so would he never submit his reason to the empire of prejudice, or own the supremacy of authority or tradition." The character is accurately and justly discriminated; but, however fully this searching panegyric is sustained and justified by the public acts and recorded labours of Lord Grenville, we must turn to his correspondence with Lord Temple for the complete development of that sagacity and sound judgment, that intimate knowledge of public affairs, and that remarkable comprehensiveness of view and lucidity of statement, by which he was distinguished above his contemporaries in an age of great political characters. This correspondence, extending over a long period of years, is not less remarkable for the constancy with which it was carried on than for the minuteness of its details, and the freedom of its revelations. Written with the ease of familiar intercourse, and in that confidential spirit which was the exponent of one of the most touching attachments that ever bound one man to another, it is

no less valuable as a close, running commentary on the events of the day, lighting up in its course the hidden springs of parliamentary action and the policy of cabinets, than it is fascinating from the teeming evidences with which it abounds of a warm heart and a highly disciplined and accomplished mind.

The Correspondence commences in 1782, when Lord North, sinking under the odium of the American war, found his small majorities rapidly diminishing from 22 to 19, then to the vanishing point of 1, and finally to a minority of 16. Every incident connected with the war, the taxes, parliamentary reform, and all other questions upon which it was possible to raise a discussion, were seized upon by the opposition to harass the Ministry. The total surrender of York Town by Lord Cornwallis, with the whole army under his command, to Washington, and of the British vessels in the harbour to the French Admiral de Grasse in the October of 1781, awakened universal indignation; and, when Parliament met in November, it became evident that, however resolved the King or the Government might be to persevere in their policy, the doom of the Administration was near at hand. Amendments to the Address, pointing ominously to a change of counsels, were moved in both houses by Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox; but nothing further was done till after the Christmas recess, with the exception of an announcement that Ministers had resolved not to send a fresh army to replace that surrendered by Lord Cornwallis.

About this time, very early in the session, a motion was contemplated on the subject, the object of which,

as may be gathered from the following notes of the Marquis of Rockingham, was to relieve Lord Cornwallis from the disgrace that impended over him, and to throw the real responsibility upon Ministers. The Marquis of Rockingham, desirous of proceeding upon more certain information than had at that time been received, appears to have advised a little delay, and to have been of opinion that if any motion were to be brought forward at that moment it ought to have taken the shape of a motion for inquiry. It is evident that the Marquis of Rockingham was already collecting his friends about him. The name of Lord Rockingham's correspondent does not appear, but, from a subsequent allusion, it may be presumed that these notes were addressed to the Duke of Chandos.

THE MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM TO THE DUKE OF CHANDOS.

My Lord,

Your Grace does me much honour in the communication of the thoughts you entertain of bringing forward some matters of business in the House of Lords.

I shall be very happy to concur in opinion with your Grace, but I must say that I cannot at present think that there is anything come to our knowledge in regard to the actual conduct of Lord Cornwallis, as commander of a British army in America, which calls for the honour of a vote of thanks from the House of Lords.

The fatal event of the army under his Lordship's command, having been reduced to the situation of being obliged to lay down their arms and surrender prisoners of war, naturally requires that an explanation or justification should precede anything that could be declaratory of approbation.

As I understand your Grace's proposition, I conceive your intentions would be, that in thanking Lord Cornwallis for his general conduct, you would at the same time state, that the plans he *was directed* to pursue and which had been so fatal, were *highly censurable*.

An inquiry into *the causes* of the loss of that army might certainly be a very proper and becoming measure; and I have very little, or rather no doubt that the blame and censure would fall heavy on many of His Majesty's Ministers, if such an inquiry was taken up, and tried by an uninfluenced or *undeluded* jury.

There is a particular circumstance, which possibly, as your Grace has been out of town, may not have come to your knowledge. I understand that Lord Cornwallis and all the officers of the army captured at York Town and Gloucester, *are under a parole of honour, and on their faith neither to say or do anything injurious to the interests of the United States or armies of America, or their allies, until exchanged.*

Your Grace will recollect, that in the Articles of Capitulation, much doubt has been held in regard to *the propriety* of one of the articles, whereby Lord Cornwallis had left some Americans (who had been in or had joined our army) to be at the mercy of the civil authority in America.

Many Lords will think that some explanation of that conduct in Lord Cornwallis is necessary; and I do not conceive that any explanation could at present be got from Lord Cornwallis.

The Duke of Richmond having called upon me this morning, I had the honour to go with his Grace to your Grace's house, hoping that you were arrived in London. The Duke of Richmond will be early at the House of Lords to-morrow, and intends to desire the House to be summoned for Monday next, in order to make some inquiry in regard to the execution of Colonel Harris, at Charlestown, in America. I will also

be early at the House of Lords to-morrow, and I shall then hope to have the opportunity, along with the Duke of Richmond, of having the honour of some more discourse upon the subject matter of your Grace's letter, and that it will not impede your Grace's intentions of some conversation in the House, on the loss of a great army.

I have the honour to be, with great regard,

Your Grace's most obedient and most humble servant,

ROCKINGHAM.

Grosvenor Square,
Wednesday, P.M. near Five o'clock,
Jan. 30th, 1782.

THE MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM TO THE DUKE OF CHANDOS.

MY LORD,

Having not gone to dinner till rather late, and my company having staid with me till just now, I have not been able to return an answer to your Grace's very obliging letter as soon as I otherwise should have done. It also prevented my being able to profit of the honour you proposed to me of calling here this evening.

I will call at the Duke of Richmond's before two o'clock to-morrow, and I hope that his Grace and I shall have the honour of meeting your Grace at the House of Lords, between two and three o'clock; I should imagine, any time before three o'clock will afford us time for the honour of some conversation together.

I have the honour to be, with great regard,

Your Grace's most obedient and most humble servant,

ROCKINGHAM.

Grosvenor Square,
Wednesday night, past Nine o'clock,
Jan. 30th, 1782.

THE MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM TO LORD TEMPLE.

My dear Lord,

I felt myself much honoured by the very kind intimation which you sent to me by Mr. T. Grenville, that your Lordship would not be unwilling to come to town, to attend in the House of Lords, in case any matter was likely to come on, which might appear to me to be of importance in the present miserable state of the affairs of this country.

I should have wrote to your Lordship to have apprized you of the motions intended by the Duke of Richmond on the subject of the execution of Colonel Harris in Charlestown in North America, and of the proclamation which had in consequence been issued by General Green. I was very doubtful in regard to the *probable day* on which the business might come to be discussed.

On the Duke of Richmond's first mentioning the subject, it came out that the Ministers at last acknowledged that they had no official information; but as a vessel had arrived from New York, and some officers had also arrived from Charlestown on Friday or Saturday last, I thought it probable that on *Monday* or *yesterday* we might have heard that they had got *official information*, and that possibly some papers would be to be laid before the House, and the discussion of the matter would then have been fixed for some day, and regularly proceeded upon.

The event was different: they continued to say that they had no official information, but chose to enter into a justification of the whole proceeding, in part urging some accounts which they said had been in a Pennsylvanian Gazette.

I am now to inform your Lordship, that the Duke of Chandos, who had thrown out an idea of inquiring into the causes of the loss and capture of Earl Cornwallis and his army, has been wished and desired to move it on Thursday next.

The Duke of Richmond, the Duke of Chandos, and Duke of Manchester, and some friends, have been here this morning, and have prepared the enclosed motion for the inquiry, and also motions for papers which would be necessary. Lord Shelburne and Lord Camden have been acquainted with the intention; the Duke of Grafton is also in town; so that I should imagine the business will be well supported. I have no expectation of any success in the House of Lords; but upon such a calamity and national disgrace, it surely will become us to propose to bring on an inquiry. Perhaps we may learn whether the Ministers intend to throw the blame either on their Commander-in-Chief, General H. Clinton, or on Earl Cornwallis, or (what some suppose), on Lord Greaves. The public at large have a right to know whether the real cause has not arose from the neglect, inability, or some other cause, in His Majesty's Ministers.

As the business is now fixed for Thursday next, I have taken the liberty of apprizing your Lordship by a messenger, who I hope will arrive before your Lordship goes to bed to-night.

I wish I could have wrote earlier. I shall be very happy in the honour of seeing your Lordship, which I hope may be soon, even if your Lordship could not at this time come to London.

I have the honour to be, with great truth and regard,

Your Lordship's most obedient and obliged humble servant,

ROCKINGHAM.

Grosvenor Square,
Tuesday, Four o'clock,
Feb. 5th, 1782.

On the 22nd of February, General Conway moved an Address to the King, imploring His Majesty to abandon the war. After a protracted debate, which lasted till two

o'clock in the morning, the Ministers found themselves in an alarming majority of 1. But they persevered in the face of these disasters, and, sustained in office by the tenacity of the King, refused to submit to the constitutional warning of Parliament. Three months before, the Duke of Richmond, writing to Lord Rockingham, anticipated the obstinacy of the Cabinet, expressing his conviction, that "no essential change of measures was meant, and none of men if it could be avoided. When I say the Ministry," he added, "I mean the King; for his servants are the merest servants that ever were."

Nor was it only by protecting an unpopular Ministry that His Majesty showed his resolution to exercise his prerogative in direct opposition to public opinion. It was in the midst of these accumulating defeats and strong expressions of popular feeling, that His Majesty raised Lord George Germain to the peerage with the title of Viscount Sackville, in open indifference to the fact that his Lordship had been dismissed from the army by the sentence of a court-martial, and declared incapable of serving His Majesty in any military capacity, in consequence of his conduct at the battle of Minden. To such proceedings as these Walpole refers, when he observes at this time that "the power of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished; and it is diminished a good deal indeed." The diminution of its power, however, was visible only in the spirited resistance of Parliament, in the motion of Lord Carmarthen in the Upper House, that it was derogatory to the honour of the House of the Lords, that any person labouring under

so heavy a sentence of a court-martial should be recommended to the Crown as worthy of a peerage, and in the successive motions which were brought forward in the Commons to force the Ministry to resign.

General Conway renewed his motion on the war on the 27th, and achieved a complete triumph, his minority of 1 being converted in five days into a majority of 19. But Lord North still clung to office, and it was not till the 6th of March, when he was beaten by a majority of 16 on the subject of the taxes, that he began to betray symptoms of a retreat. On the 8th the motion on the war was renewed, when Ministers, collecting the whole force of placemen and contractors, obtained a majority of 10, which was reduced afterwards to 9 on a vote of confidence. The crisis had now arrived. The Earl of Surrey had given notice in the Lords of a motion to the effect that Ministers no longer possessed the confidence of the country, when Lord North entered the House, and informed their Lordships that His Majesty had come to a determination to make an entire change of Administration.

This was on the 19th of March. But so far back as the 11th His Majesty had been in negotiation with the Marquis of Rockingham, through the agency of Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who detained his Lordship in the House for an hour and a half after it had adjourned to converse with him, by His Majesty's desire, upon the practicability of forming an Administration "on a broad bottom." The negotiation with Thurlow spread over an entire week, and entirely failed on the plan proposed by His Majesty, who wished

to limit Lord Rockingham in the first instance to the nomination of a Cabinet whose policy should lie over for future consideration. "I must confess," observes Lord Rockingham, in one of his letters to the Lord Chancellor, "that I do not think it an advisable measure, first to attempt to form a Ministry by arrangement of office—afterwards to decide upon what principles or measures they are to act."

The day this letter was written Lord North resigned; and in two days afterwards His Majesty renewed the negotiation with Lord Rockingham, finally agreeing to the whole of his propositions, and reserving only the household in his own hands. While these negotiations were in progress, Lord Temple wrote to Lord Rockingham, expressing his earnest hope that the "cards should be dealt only into those hands where he so much wished them, from every motive of public and private regard." Before the end of the month the cards *were* dealt into the hands in which Lord Temple wished to see them, and the new Ministry was completed, with Lord Rockingham as First Lord of the Treasury; Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox as Secretaries of State; Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Admiral Keppel, at the head of the Admiralty; General Conway (much to the King's dissatisfaction), at the Horse Guards; with the additional strength of the Dukes of Richmond and Grafton, and Lords Camden and Ashburton, Burke, Sheridan, and Colonel Barré, in other offices; Thurlow (the only Tory in the Cabinet) still continuing as Lord Chancellor.

One of the earliest measures of the new Government was to negotiate a peace with America; and Mr. Thomas Grenville was appointed upon a mission for that purpose to Paris, to meet Dr. Franklin. The history of that mission is contained in a series of deeply interesting letters, which, independently of the flood of light they throw upon the American business, possess a permanent value as illustrations of the personal characters of the writers (especially those of Sheridan, to whose rashness Mr. Grenville makes express allusion), and as showing that, even in office, the Whigs were not united amongst themselves. The materials of which the Cabinet was formed, being composed of the Rockingham, and the Chatham, or Shelburne Whigs—two sections of that party which had never cordially coalesced—was not calculated to work together; but it could not have been anticipated that their personal jealousies would have taken a shape so dangerous as these letters disclose.

It is clear, from the singular facts revealed in this Correspondence, that, while an ostensible Minister was dispatched to Paris by the general action of the Government, with the sanction of the King, to negotiate terms with the American Minister, Lord Shelburne had taken upon himself to appoint another negotiator, who was not only not to act in concert with Mr. Grenville, but whose clandestine mission seems to have been expressly intended to thwart and embarrass him, and whose appointment was without the approval, or even the knowledge, of the Cabinet. How far the King may have secretly supported Lord Shelburne in this breach of faith with his colleagues,

we are left to conjecture; but the intriguing character ascribed to His Majesty by Lord Shelburne himself, justifies, to some extent, the suspicion that a proceeding so bold and so full of hazard to the Whig Administration, was not adopted upon the sole responsibility of the Minister. Lord Shelburne said of the King, that he "possessed one art beyond any man he had ever known; for that by the familiarity of his intercourse he obtained your confidence, procured from you your opinion of different public characters, and then availed himself of this knowledge to sow dissensions."* This opinion, just or unjust (and there is no great reason to doubt its justice), was founded upon extensive personal experiences, of which this sinister attempt to break up the union of the Cabinet may have been one.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

St. James's, May 21st, 1782.

DEAR GRENVILLE,

You are certainly one of the best negotiators that ever negotiated; and so says the King, your royal master, who is going to send you the fine silver box which you receive with this, and which, with great envy, I learn is your property; and which, if the serious modesty of your former despatch could have been seriously construed, you would not have been entitled to. Though I have not written before, have not my punctuality and remembrance appeared conspicuous in the newspapers you receive? These tell you all the private news, and all that is

* Nicholl's Recollections and Reflections during the reign of George III.

important of public you will have heard before you receive this; so this must be a very short letter, and indeed the messenger is almost going; and Charles has been writing to you, which is another reason for my saying very little. Mr. Oswald talks very sanguinely about Franklin, and says he is more open to you than he has been to any one; but he is a Scotsman, and belonging to Lord Shelburne. If the business of an American treaty seemed likely to prosper in your hands, I should not think it improbable that Lord Shelburne would try to thwart it. Oswald had not yet seen Lord Shelburne; and by his cajoling manner to *our secretary* and eagerness to come to him, I do not feel much prejudiced in his favour; but probably I judge wrongly whenever the other secretary is concerned, for I grow suspicious of him in every respect, the more I see of every transaction of his.

I am just told that the messenger is ready, so more in my next. There is no particular news. The Dutch are got back to the Texel. Lord Howe still off there, but nothing likely to come of it. Sir G. Rodney, notwithstanding his victory, is to be recalled, and Pigott is sailed. This I think very magnanimous in the Ministers or very impolitic; events must justify, but it is putting themselves too much in their power.

We had a good illumination for this news. You see how we go on in Parliament by the papers; we were bullied outrageously about our poor Parliamentary Reform; but it will do at last, in spite of you all.

Yours ever sincerely,

R. B. Sheridan.

MR. FOX TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Dear Grenville,

If your letter of the 10th a little damped me in my hopes of good effects from your journey, that of the 19th, which I have

just received, together with Mr. Oswald's conversation, has very much revived me. I send away the messenger, for fear of the delays which Cabinets are so apt to cause; but I hope you will hear from us again very soon, with authority to offer the Independence as unconditionally as you can wish. Mr. Oswald says that Dr. Franklin is much inclined to confide in you; if so, ask him at once in what manner we can act so as to gain a substantial, if not a nominal, peace with America; and you may depend upon all my influence in support of his advice.

I hope you will not be disappointed at our adhering to our first ideas for the proposition *we* are to make, rather than offering concessions. If *we* are to offer, we think it is not for us to throw concessions at their head; but if they do not like our proposals, it is for *them* to ask such as may be reasonable. If what they propose is really so, there is no doubt of our complying; and if it is not, or they should refuse to make any offer at all, it will surely be clear who was most in earnest in his wishes for peace; and we must make the best advantage we can of our situation, about which I begin to be more sanguine than I used to do.

From your letter, there are surely great hopes of detaching America; and from those we have just received from Petersburg, there appears the most favourable disposition in that quarter to enforce a peace with Holland; or if that cannot be, to take a decisive part. And I know how much this disposition will be increased, if we can fully convince His Imperial Majesty that the failure of your negotiation is not our fault.

With regard to all your diffidence of yourself, we laugh at it. If, in order to save yourself bodily labour, you want a secretary, write, and you shall have one; but for any other purpose, you want no assistance, but are allowed by everybody, and the King in particular, to be the best writer of despatches that is known in this office.

Adieu. I envy you the pleasure of announcing the news from the West Indies, with all the modest insolence which belongs to the occasion.

Yours most affectionately,

Pray make my best respects to Dr. Franklin, whose letter to me contained some very promising expressions. Assure him that, in spite of all that has happened, he and I are still of the same country.

St. James's, Tuesday night,
May 21st, 1782.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

St. James's, May 26th, 1782.

My dear Grenville,

Charles not being well, I write to you at his desire, that you may not be surprized at having no private letter from him with the despatch which Mr. Oswald brings you. There is not room, I believe, for much communication of any very private nature on the subject of your instructions and situation, as his public letter, you will see, is very sincerely to the purpose. If anything in it admits of modification, or is not to be very literally taken, I should conceive it to be the recommendation of explicitness with Oswald; on which subject I own I have suggested doubts; and Charles wishes you to have a caution for your own discretion to make use of.

I perceive uniformly (from our intercepted information) that all these *city* negotiators—Mr. Wentworths, Bourdeaux, &c.—insinuate themselves into these sort of affairs merely for private advantages, and make their trust principally subservient to stock-jobbing views, on which subject there appears to be a surprising communication with Paris. Mr. Oswald's officious-

ness in bringing over your despatch and other things I have been told since by those who know him, lead me to form this kind of opinion of him; but you will judge where this will apply to any confidence that should be placed in him.

Surely, whatever the preliminaries of a treaty for peace with France may be, it would be our interest, if we could, to drop even mentioning the Americans in them; at least the seeming to grant anything to them as at the requisition of France. France now denies our ceding Independence to America to be anything given to them, and declines to allow anything for it. In my opinion it would be wiser in them to insist ostentatiously (and even to make a point of allowing something for it) on the Independence of America being as the first article of their treating; and this would for ever furnish them with a claim on the friendship and confidence of the Americans after the peace. But since they do not do this, surely it would not be bad policy, even if we gave up more to France in other respects, to prevent her appearing in the treaty as in any respect the champion of America, or as having made any claims for her; we giving her up everything she wants equally, and her future confidence and alliance being such an object to us. Were I the Minister, I would give France an island or two to choose, if it would expose her selfishness, sooner than let her gain the *esteem of the Americans* by claiming anything essential for them in apparent preference to her own interest and ambition. All people, of all descriptions, in America, will read the treaty of peace, whenever it comes, which France shall make with this country; and if they should see there that she has claimed and got a good deal for herself, but has not appeared to have thought of them, however they may have profited in fact, it would certainly give us a great advantage in those sort of arguments and competitions which will arise after a peace; whereas if it appears as a stipulated demand on the part of France that America should be independent, it will for

ever be a most handy record and argument for the French party in that country to work with; and this, as things stand now, and as far as my poor judgment goes, appears not to be a very difficult thing to have either way. And so these are my politics on that subject for you.

You will find Rodney has taken some more ships. The unluckiness of his recal, I think, appears to increase in its ill effect; and people don't seem to fancy Pigott. Rolle has given notice that he will move on Thursday to know who advised His Majesty to recal Rodney; and out of doors the talk is the same. Charles gave Johnson, who had been very violent on this subject the other day, an excellent trimming; but there was a good deal of coy with the other.

The arming plan don't seem to take at all. We have not yet heard from Ireland since Burgoyne took them over a constitution.*

There is nothing odd or new to tell you, but that here is a most untimely strange sort of an influenza which every creature catches. You must not mind the badness of my scrawl: and let me hear from you. Does Lafayette join your consultation dinners with Franklin, as some of our Roupell intelligence sets forth? I take it for granted the French Ministers will think it a point of spirit to seem rather less desirous of peace since your defeat in the West?

Howe is still off the Texel, and the Dutch safe within.

What mere politics I write to you! One might as well be a newspaper editor at once, I believe, as anything that politics can make one: but all other pursuits are as idle and unsatisfactory, and that's a comfort.

Yours ever,

R. B. Sheridan.

* The Duke of Rutland had been appointed by the new Ministry Lord-Lieutenant in Ireland, and General Burgoyne Commander-in-Chief there.

MR. FOX TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

DEAR GRENVILLE,

I have only time to write a line to tell you that I have received your letter by Gregson, and also that by the post containing the letters that passed between M. de Vergennes and you. I do not choose to tell you anything more of my opinion by this conveyance, than that all you have done is perfectly and exactly right, and that His Majesty is of the same opinion.

Rolle moved yesterday, and Rosewarne seconded, a sort of censure on the recal of Rodney, and Lord North made such a figure as made even his enemies pity him; he showed such a desire to support the motion, without daring to do it, as was perfectly ridiculous. Adieu!

Yours, ever affectionately,

C. J. F.

We are all surprised at your not knowing the great news on the 24th, which was the date of your letter by Gregson.

Every account from Ireland is pleasant to the greatest degree.

St. James's, May 31st, 1782.

MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO MR. FOX.

Paris, June 4th, 1782.

DEAR CHARLES,

The *public* letter which I send to you by Lauzun, is, as you will see, of no other use than that of accounting for his journey, and enabling him to carry to you this *private* one, of which I had once almost determined to be myself the bearer; an apprehension, however, that so sudden an arrival might be

embarrassing to you, has decided me not to take that step, till I had explained to you my reasons for wishing to do so, though I should not care to write them, except in the full confidence that they will be seen by no person whatever but yourself. Recollect always that this letter is written in that confidence, and I am sure I never can repent of having sent it.

You will easily see, from the tenor of the correspondence we have hitherto had, that what little use I could be of to you here, appeared to me to be in the communication that I had with Franklin; I considered the rest of the negotiation as dependent upon that, and the only possible immediate advantages which were to be expected, seemed to me to rest in the jealousy which the French Court would entertain of not being thoroughly supported in everything by America. The degree of confidence which Franklin seemed inclined to place in me, and which he expressed to me more than once in the strongest terms, very much favoured this idea, and encouraged me in wishing to learn from him what might be in future ground for a partial connection between England and America; I say in future, because I have hitherto never much believed in any treaty of the year 1782; and my expectation, even from the strongest of Franklin's expressions, was not of an immediate turn in our favour, or any positive advantage from the Commissioners in Europe, till the people in America should cry out to them, from seeing that England was meeting their wishes. It was in this light, too, that I saw room to hope for some good effects from a voluntary offer of unconditional independence to America, a chance which looked the more tempting as I own I considered the sacrifice as but a small one, and such as, had I been an American, I had thought myself little obliged to Great Britain in this moment for granting, except from an idea that if it was an article of treaty, it would have been as much given by France as by England. I repeat this only to

remind you that, from these considerations, the whole of my attention has been given to Franklin, and that I should have considered myself as losing my time here, if it had not been directed to that subject.

I believe I told you in my last, that I had very sanguine expectations of Franklin's being inclined to speak out when I should see him next; indeed, he expressly told me, that he would think over all the points likely to establish a solid reconciliation between England and America, and that he would write his mind upon them, in order that we might examine them together more in order; confiding, as he said, in me, that I would not state them as propositions from him, but as being my own ideas of what would be useful to both countries. (I interrupt myself here to remind you of the obligation I must put you under not to mention this). For this very interesting communication, which I had long laboured to get, he fixed the fourth day, which was last Saturday; but on Friday morning, Mr. Oswald came, and having given me your letters, he went immediately to Franklin, to carry some to him. I kept my appointment at Passy the next morning, and in order to give Franklin the greatest confidence, and at the same time, too, not knowing how much Mr. Oswald might have told him, I began with saying, that though under the difficulty which M. de Ve. and he himself had made to my full power, it was not the moment as a politician, perhaps, to make farther explanations till that difficulty should be relieved; yet, to show him the confidence I put in him, I would begin by telling him that I was authorized to offer the independence in the first instance, instead of making it an article of general treaty. He expressed great satisfaction at this, especially, he said, because, by having done otherwise, we should have seemed to have considered America as in the same degree of connection with France which she had been under with us; whereas, America

wished to be considered as a power, free and clear to all the world. But when I came to lead the discourse to the subject which he had promised four days before, I was a good deal mortified to find him put it off altogether till he should be more ready; and notwithstanding my reminding him of his promise, he only answered that it should be in some days. What passed between Mr. Oswald and me will explain to you the reason of this disappointment.

Mr. Oswald told me that Lord Shelburne had proposed to him, when last in England, to take a commission to treat with the American Ministers; that upon his mentioning it to Franklin now, it seemed perfectly agreeable to him, and even to be what he had very much wished; Mr. Oswald adding that he wished only to assist the business, and had no other view; he mixed with this a few regrets that there should be any difference between the two offices; and when I asked upon what subject, he said, owing to the Rockingham party being too ready to give up everything.

You will observe though, for it is on that account that I give you this narrative, that this intended appointment has effectually stopped Franklin's mouth to me; and that when he is told that Mr. Oswald is to be the Commissioner to treat with him, it is but natural that he should reserve his confidence for the quarter so pointed out to him; nor does this secret seem only known to Franklin; as Lafayette said, laughing, yesterday, that he had just left *Lord Shelburne's ambassador* at Passy. Indeed, this is not the first moment of a separate and private negotiation; for Mr. Oswald, suspecting, by something that I dropped, that Franklin had talked to me about Canada, (though, by the bye, he never had), told me this circumstance as follows. When he was in England, the last time but one, he carried with him a paper, entrusted to him by Franklin, under condition that it should be shown only to Lord Shel-

burne, and returned into his own hands at Passy; this paper, under the title of "Notes of a Conversation," contained an idea of Canada being spontaneously ceded by England to the Thirteen Provinces, in order that Congress might sell the unappropriated lands, and make a fund thereby, in order to compensate the damages done by the English army, and even those sustained too by the royalists. This paper, given with many precautions, for fear of its being known to the French Court, to whom it was supposed not to be agreeable, Mr. Oswald showed to Lord Shelburne, who, after keeping it a day, as Mr. Oswald supposes to show to the King, returned it to him, and it was by him brought back to Franklin.

I say nothing to the proposition itself, to the impolicy of bringing a strange neighbourhood to the Newfoundland Fishery, or to the little reason that England would naturally see in having lost thirteen provinces to give away a fourteenth; but I mention it to show you an early trace of separate negotiation, which perhaps you did not before know. Under these circumstances, I felt very much tempted to go over and explain them to you *vivâ voce* rather than by letter, and I must say, with the farther intention of suggesting to you the only idea that seems likely to answer your purpose, and it is this: the Spanish Ambassador will in a day or two have the powers from his Court; the Americans are here, so are the French; why should you not consider this then as a Congress in full form, and send here a person of rank, such as Lord Fitzwilliam, if he would come, so as to have the whole negotiation in the hands of one person; you would by that means recover within your compass the essential part which is now out of it; nor do I see how Lord Shelburne could object to such an appointment, which would in every respect very much facilitate the business. Let me press this a little strongly to you, for another reason: you may depend upon it, people here have already got an idea of a

difference between the two offices, and consider how much that idea will be assisted by the embarrassments arising from two people negotiating to the same purpose, but under different and differing authorities, concealing and disguising from each other what with the best intentions they could hardly make known, and common enough to each. I am almost afraid of pressing this as strongly as I should, for fear you should think me writing peevishly; but if I did not state the thing to you in the situation in which I see it, I should think I was betraying your interests instead of giving attention to them. I must entreat you very earnestly to consider this, to see the impossibility of my assisting you under this contrariety, to see how much the business itself will suffer if carried on with the jealousy of these clashing interests, and to see whether it may not all be prevented by some such single appointment in high rank as that I mentioned; *au reste*, I cannot but say that I feel much easier with the hope of making over what remains of this business. I begin to feel it weighty, and you know how much I dislike the *publicity* you packed off to me in that confounded silver box; I could not bring myself to say anything civil about it in my last letter, and you ought to give me credit for great self-denial in not taking this opportunity of telling you my own story at the Secretary's office, as nothing but the embarrassment it might give you upon the sudden, prevented me. Once more, I tell you I cannot fight a daily battle with Mr. Oswald and *his secretary*; it would be neither for the advantage of the business, for your interest, or your credit or mine; and even if it was, I could not do it.

Concluding then the American business as out of the question, which *personally* I cannot be sorry for, you surely have but one of two things to do: either to adopt the proposition of a new *dignified* peer's appointment, which being single, may bring back the business to you by comprehending it all in one;

or Lord Shelburne must have his minister here, and Mr. Fox his; by doing which, Mr. Fox will be pretty near as much out of the secret, at least of what is most essential, as if he had nobody here; and the only real gainers by it will be the other Ministers, who cannot fail to profit of such a jumble. Besides which, upon this latter part of the subject, I must very seriously entreat you not to ask me to keep a situation here, in no circumstances pleasant, and in none less so than those I have described. The grievance is a very essential one, the remedy is Lord Fitzwilliam.

Adieu. I recommend to Lauzun to make all the haste he can, as I shall not stir a step till you answer this letter, and my step then will, I hope, be towards you. Sheridan's letter of suspicion was written, as you see, in the spirit of prophecy. I owe him an answer, which, by word of mouth or word of letter, he shall have very soon. The news of the day is, that the Cadiz fleet, twenty-six of the line and five French, are sailed for Brest, but I rather imagine they have no authentic account of it yet.

I enclose to you P. Guemené's offer of some good champagne; if you choose to have any, tell me what number of bottles, and let Brooks or somebody let me know how they are to be sent to England. I don't understand champagne, but this has a good character.

Adieu. Let Lord Fitzwilliam answer my letter.

MR. FOX TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

(Private.) St. James's, June 10th, 1782.

DEAR GRENVILLE,

I received late the night before last your very interesting letter of the 4th, and you will easily conceive am not a little embarrassed by its contents. In the first place, it was not

possible to comply with your injunction of perfect secrecy in a case where steps of such importance are necessary to be taken; and therefore I have taken upon me (for which I must trust to your friendship to excuse me) to show your letter to Lord Rockingham, the Duke of Richmond and Lord John, who are all as full of indignation at its contents as one might reasonably expect honest men to be. We are perfectly resolved to come to an explanation upon the business, if it is possible so to do, without betraying any confidence reposed in me by you, or in you by others.

The two principal points which occur are the paper relative to Canada, of which I had never heard till I received your letter, and the intended investment of Mr. Oswald with full powers, which was certainly meant for the purpose of diverting Franklin's confidence from you into another channel. With these two points we wish to charge Shelburne directly; but pressing as the King is, and interesting as it is both to our own situations and to the affairs of the public—which are, I fear, irretrievably injured by this intrigue, and which must be ruined if it is suffered to go on—we are resolved not to stir a step till we hear again from you, and know precisely how far we are at liberty to make use of what you have discovered. If this matter should produce a rupture, and consequently become more or less the subject of public discussion, I am sensible the Canada paper cannot be mentioned by name; but might it not be said that we had discovered that Shelburne had withheld from our knowledge matters of importance to the negotiation? And with respect to the other point, might it not be said, without betraying anybody, that while the King had one avowed and authorized Minister at Paris, measures were taken for lessening his credit and for obstructing his inquiries by announcing a new intended commission, of which the Cabinet here had never been apprized.

Do, pray, my dear Grenville, consider the incredible importance of this business in every view, and write me word precisely how far you can authorize us to make use of your intelligence. It is more than possible that, before this reaches you, many other circumstances may have occurred which may afford further proofs of this duplicity of conduct; and if they have, I am sure they will not have escaped your observation. If this should be the case, you will see the necessity of acquainting me with them as soon as possible. You see what is our object, and you can easily judge what sort of evidence will be most useful to us. When the object is attained—that is, when the duplicity is proved—to what consequences we ought to drive; whether to an absolute rupture, or merely to the recal of Oswald and the simplification of this negotiation, is a point that may be afterwards considered. I own I incline to the more decisive measure, and so I think do those with whom I must act in concert.

I am very happy indeed that you did not come yourself: the mischief that would have happened from it to our affairs are incredible; and I must beg of you, nay, entreat and conjure you, not to think of taking any precipitate step of this nature. As to the idea of replacing you with Lord Fitzwilliam, not only it would be very objectionable on account of the mistaken notion it would convey of things being much riper than they are, but it would, as I conceive, be no remedy to the evil. Whether the King's Minister at Paris be an Ambassador Extraordinary or a Minister Plenipotentiary, can make no difference as to the question. The clandestine manner of carrying on a separate negotiation, which we complain of, would be equally practicable and equally blameable if Lord Fitzwilliam was Ambassador, as it is now that Mr. Grenville is Plenipotentiary. I must therefore again entreat you, as a matter of personal kindness to me, to remain a little longer at

Paris; if you were to leave it, all sorts of suspicions would be raised. It is of infinite consequence that we should have it to say that we have done all in our power to make peace, not only with regard to what may be expected from America, but from Europe.

The King of Prussia is certainly inclined to be our friend; but he urges and presses to make peace if possible. If we could once bring the treaty to such a point as that, stating the demands on each side to him, we could have his approbation for breaking it off, I think it not impossible but the best consequences might follow; and with regard to North America, it is surely clear to demonstration, that it is of infinite consequence that it should be publicly understood who is to blame if the war continues. I do hope, therefore, that you will at all events stay long enough to make your propositions, and to call upon them to make others in return. I know your situation cannot be pleasant; but as you first undertook it in a great measure from friendship to me, so let me hope that the same motive will induce you to continue in it at least for some time.

What will be the end of this, God knows; but I am sure you will agree with me, that we cannot suffer a system to go on which is not only dishonourable to us, but evidently ruinous to the affairs of the country. In this instance, the mischief done by intercepting, as it were, the very useful information we expected through you from Franklin, is I fear in a great degree irremediable; but it is our business, and indeed our duty, to prevent such things for the future.

Everything in Ireland goes on very well; and I really think there is good reason to entertain hopes from Prussia and Russia, if your negotiation either goes on or goes off as it ought to do.

I can hardly read Monsieur de Guemené's letter, but wish to have two hundred bottles of the champagne, if there is really

reason to think it good. By the way, I beg you will remember me to Monsieur de Guemené, and put him in mind of our former acquaintance in the Rue St. Pierre. If the wine in question is as good as that he used to rob from Monsieur de Soubise, I shall be very well satisfied. I will give Brooks directions to acquaint you with the proper manner of sending it. I am quite ashamed of dwelling so long upon this, after the very serious business of this letter; but you know I cannot help being a friend to the *poor abuses;* and besides, in a political light, good wine is no mean ingredient in keeping one's friends in good humour and steady to the cause.

I am,

My dear Grenville,

Yours most affectionately,

C. J. Fox.

MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO MR. FOX.

(Private.) Paris, June 16th, 1782.

Dear Charles,

I received your letter of the 10th by Ogg on the night of the 14th, and would have sent him back as immediately as you seemed to wish; but having no other messenger to carry M. de Vergennes's answer, I was obliged to keep him till he could be the bearer of that likewise.

I can easily conceive the embarrassment occasioned to you by my letter, and have so much confidence in the honour of the persons to whom you communicated it, that I am not under the smallest uneasiness on that account; the explanation, however, that you wish to come to, certainly has its difficulties; and amongst them some so sacred, that unless they can be kept altogether clear, you cannot but agree with me in thinking that they must be buried at least in silence, though not in oblivion.

In order therefore that you may see into every part of this business, I will, as you desire, state in the most explicit manner the circumstances of it, as far as I think they affect any confidence reposed in me.

In the first place, then, you will have observed, that although Franklin has actually made me no confidence, owing, as I believe, without doubt, to the reasons I stated, yet as the communication he had said he would make to me was of the most confidential nature, and in full trust that the subjects which he should mention should not be given as propositions coming from him, I think it would be a breach of that confidence to make it known even that he had promised to hold such a conversation with me; and therefore to charge Lord Shelburne with having diverted from me that expected communication, would be to proclaim Franklin's promise to me; which promise, though it has not been followed up, I cannot think myself at liberty to quote. The delicacy of Franklin's situation with respect to the French Court was, as he said, the ground of the caution which he observed, and which, nevertheless, he was once inclined to risk in my trust. He would certainly have both to repent and to complain if anything on my part should lead to betray even the confidential disposition he had entertained. These reasons you will, I am sure, agree with me in considering as decisive against any mention being to be made of the expectations I had formed from the conversation I was to have had with Franklin.

The Canada paper is not perhaps quite under the same circumstances. The only knowledge I have of that is from Oswald; and as I before told you, I had it from him at a moment when I fancy he apprehended I had heard or should hear of it from Franklin. No other reason, indeed, can account for his not mentioning it from the end of April till the 31st of May. He told it me under no express limitation of

confidence: the words in which he introduced it were, "I think it right you should know;" and I am perfectly sure that he asked from me no engagement of secrecy, nor do I conceive myself under any with regard to him, except that general secrecy which is always attached to business of a confidential nature, such as was the business I related to you. I recollect asking whether he had showed the paper to you: he said No; but did not add any injunction to me not to do so; indeed, if he had, I should have stated to him the impossibility of my keeping from you a circumstance of that importance, or of my becoming, by my silence in it, a separate party to a business which it was my duty fully and entirely to lay before you and to receive from you; nor indeed at this moment is the knowledge of it confined to Lord Shelburne; as I am pretty sure Oswald told me that Lord Ashburton was with Lord Shelburne when he, Oswald, asked if he might give any answer to Franklin about the paper, or rather observed that he supposed he could not then have any answer to it. Under these circumstances, the difficulty with regard to the Canada paper, of which I have no copy, lies more possibly in the indelicacy and perhaps bad policy of bringing forward Franklin where he wished so much not to appear, than in the quoting it from me. I do not wish to be quoted, if there exists the least doubt whether I should. But I cannot more exactly explain to you the whole extent of that doubt, than by showing you that it does not exist in any specific obligation on my part, but only in the nature of what was told to me; the subject itself carrying with it, as you will see, many reasons for secrecy, and every mark of it in the manner of conducting it; but as to positive engagement or obligation upon this subject, I have none.

The remaining circumstance—of the intention mentioned to Mr. Oswald by Lord Shelburne, of giving him a commission if it should be necessary—stands altogether clear of the slightest

shade of difficulty upon the point of confidence; indeed, at the time I wrote you word of it, I did not imagine I was informing you of anything new or unknown to you; and only so far meant to dwell upon it, as to regret its happening precisely at the instant when it was most important it should not. I apprehended that Lord Shelburne might have already expressed such an intention to the rest of the King's Ministers, upon the ground of the American share of this business, which ground, in the present stage of it, I thought possibly you had not found it easy to object to. In this idea it was that Lord Fitzwilliam's appointment occurred to me, not to prevent a clandestine negotiation, but to unite a separated one; always imagining that you knew of, but did not resist, the intended commission to Mr. Oswald, and therefore hinting the expediency of superseding it, by giving to another person an appointment of such rank and magnitude as should include a power which it seems neither for the public interest, nor for yours and your friends' interests, to leave separate and distinct.

To return, however, to the point of confidence: upon this last subject there is none; and you are certainly at full liberty to proclaim at Charing Cross that Lord Shelburne told Mr. Oswald he supposed he would not object to a commission if it should be necessary; and that since his last return to Paris, Mr. Oswald has told me he found it very much Franklin's wish likewise. If I may repeat, therefore, in a few words, what I have tried to express to you in a good many, it is that, as to Franklin's first intention of a private and confidential communication with me, I hold myself so engaged in secrecy to him, that I think it would be a breach of confidence in me to have that intention at all spoken of. As to the Canada paper, I leave it, with the comment I have made upon it, altogether to your discretion; and as to the proposed commission, you are certainly at full liberty to say of it what you please. I have it

not in my power to give you any additional proofs of sinister management in this business. I seldom see Oswald, though upon good terms with him; and have seen Franklin, since Oswald's coming, but once, when he was as silent as ever, notwithstanding my reminding him of his promise; so that I cannot help thinking that business altogether irretrievable. But neither do I know what you will gain by forcing Oswald's return; indeed I am inclined to think it might be much more prudent to save appearances by leaving him here, till you shall have completed your purpose of receiving the propositions you wish or the refusal you wish from Versailles. Perhaps, politically speaking, you may not think it wise to make the conduct, or rather misconduct, of a foreign negotiation the ground of a domestic rupture, which may betray too much weakness and disunion; but this is too delicate a subject for me to say anything upon, more than to assure you that, whatever is your determination about it, you will not find me shrink from the part I have or may have to take in it.

And one word here about the desire I have expressed to return to England: it is impossible not to say that I feel that desire in the strongest degree. I would not speak peevishly about my disappointment in the unlucky check that I have met with; but I think you will agree that the real service it might have been my good fortune perhaps to have been assisting in, is by that check completely annihilated, nor can any step now taken recover or retrieve it; and that consideration weighs pretty heavily in a situation in itself not agreeable to me. But if I repeat this now, it is to keep you awake to the earnest solicitations I make of returning in the first moment you may think it practicable; till then you need have no apprehension of seeing me, but may trust that no personal motives, however strong, can weigh against the important reasons you state, as well as the desire you express, for my continuing something longer at Paris.

I am writing to you on the 16th, waiting impatiently for M. de Vergennes's answer, which he gave me reason to hope I shall have to-morrow.

MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO MR. FOX.

June 21st.

I have been waiting day after day, and have not got my answer till a few hours ago. I am sorry to have kept you so long, but you see it was impossible to avoid it. A report prevails that Bougainville is arrived at St. Domingo with two ships, as likewise are the four that were at Curaçao. They add that Rodney had been obliged to burn three of his captured ships. La Motthe Peguet has twice had orders to sail from Brest with his seven ships, and as often been recalled. They expect Guichen soon with the fleet from Cadiz of thirty-two ships: they are said to have sailed on the 4th.

Pray tell Sheridan to be more cautious in what he writes by the post. If I had time I should give him a lecture; but I want to send away the messenger.

Adieu. Oswald affects to consider me now as fully authorized, but I believe expects different news as soon as the Independence Bill is passed; but I cannot help thinking you had better leave him where he is, for his going away will mend nothing. I have bought your wine.

Ever very affectionately yours,

T. G.

Within a few days after this letter reached England, the Rockingham Administration had ceased to exist. The Marquis of Rockingham, whose health had been declining for some time, died on the 1st of July, and was succeeded in his title by his nephew, the Earl Fitzwilliam,

who is alluded to in these letters by Mr. Thomas Grenville. The first intimation of this event conveyed to the Plenipotentiary at Paris was in a letter from his brother, Lord Temple. The circumstances that immediately followed are detailed in the letters of Lord Temple and Mr. Sheridan, written on the same day, and in a letter from Mr. Fox on the day following. The apprehension expressed by Lord Temple that Fox's resignation would be ascribed by the public to a mean contest for offices was not unfounded; although such a motive cannot be believed to have influenced the mind of that statesman, the conviction of what he felt to be his duty on this occasion being shared by Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Burke, Lord John Cavendish, Lord Althorpe and others, who instantly followed his example. The King's undisguised predilection for Lord Shelburne arose from the nearer agreement of their opinions on the American question, than existed between His Majesty and the Rockingham section of the Cabinet, who were for an unconditional recognition of the independence of America—a proceeding regarded by His Majesty with aversion. The rapidity with which the changes were adopted furnished a sufficient reason for Fox's determination not to act under Lord Shelburne, that nobleman having accepted the appointment to the Treasury immediately on the death of Lord Rockingham, without consultation with his colleagues, and Lord Grantham being appointed in the same unceremonious way to the secretaryship vacated by his Lordship. A remarkable contradiction will be observed in the language held on this occasion by Lord Shelburne, who is reported

by Lord Temple to have stated that he looked naturally to the Treasury, and knew no reason why he should forego it, while to Sheridan he declared that he entered upon the office against his wish.

LORD TEMPLE TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

London, July 4th, Twelve P.M. 1782.

My dear Brother,

My letters by the post have been so unfortunate, and the subject of the present hour is so important, that I have waited all this day for the certainty of a courier, and I am now promised that one shall be dispatched immediately. I was in the country when I received from Mr. Fox an express with the news of Lord Rockingham's death, and an earnest entreaty to come to town; which I did, and found him anxious for the future arrangements. I told him, in the course of our conversation, that I held myself engaged to support the measures of the body of the Whigs, and deprecated any precipitate resolution, unless there was reason to imagine that *measures* would be changed. He told me that a meeting had been held of the four friends of Lord Rockingham; *viz.*, the Duke of Richmond, Lord J. Cavendish, Keppell and himself; that they had agreed to submit the Duke of Portland's name to the King, for the Treasury, but with little hopes of success; that he had writ to other great peers, &c., to come to town, and wished for their opinions; that he took it for granted that Lord Shelburne would insist upon the Treasury, and that the King would support him in that claim; that his idea was to quit immediately, but that others differed upon this, but that he was to see Lord Shelburne, and should then know more. This interview took place, and the first account I had of it was from Lord Shelburne, who came to me in the House of Lords and

desired to tell it to me. He stated general willingness to accommodate, and a fixed determination at all events to adhere to every measure of reform which had been proposed, and to facilitate Cabinet arrangements as far as could be hoped from him; that it was natural that the Treasury should be an object to him, that he knew no reason why he was always to forego, and stated the indisposition of the King's mind to any other person at the head of that board. This was attended with every expression of civility to me, and an earnest wish that I would not decline employment, but would engage in the King's service. To this I made the answer which you can so easily conceive, and told him very fairly my intention to act with the great body of the Whigs; I proceeded to state the inconceivable difficulties attending our situation, the necessity of union, and the certain consequences of a breach between himself and the other great features of the Ministry.

I can hardly give you the detail of this very long conversation. It was very free and open on both sides, and convinced me that he was certainly, and at all hazards, to have the situation, of which I hardly had a doubt before. He pledged himself repeatedly to the public measures, and to a variety of details which it is not necessary to state, and left me with every personal expression and many wishes that I would reconsider my answer. The next moment, Fox came to me in the Prince's chamber, and I had nearly as long a conversation with him; he stated his knowledge that Lord Shelburne would succeed to Lord Rockingham, and his idea of throwing up. I stated Lord Shelburne's promises to measures, which I found Lord Shelburne had made to him; but the loss of the object, which was evidently a favourite point with him, seemed to affect him much. I repeated my apprehensions that the people would not stand by him in his attempt to quit upon private grounds, which from their nature would appear to be a quarrel for offices, and not a public measure. He saw all this, and said

that it had been urged to him by several, but that he was not *determined*. I went into the House of Lords, where I found the Duke of Richmond, who was outrageous at the idea of a resignation, and who went before me in all I had said to Fox upon this subject; and you will easily conceive that this opinion was strengthened by the most explicit speech that I ever heard, which Lord Shelburne gave as his creed and the test of his conduct, and which indeed seemed satisfactory to every one who heard him.

This day has opened a new scene: the King declared his intention of giving the Treasury to Lord Shelburne; and it was proposed to Lord J. Cavendish to take the vacant seals, which, from variety of reasons, Lord John declined; and notwithstanding all that the Duke of Richmond could urge, Fox has resigned, and the King has accepted the seals. *En nova progenies!* Lord Shelburne keeps the Treasury, and it is *supposed* that Pitt is his Chancellor of the Exchequer; Duke of Grafton, Lord Camden, Conway, Duke of Richmond and Keppell remain, and mean to go on; who are the two Secretaries are not known. I have had a long conversation just now with the Duke of Richmond, who is unhappy, but determined to go on *till the first breach on fair public grounds*; and wherever or whenever he finds Lord Shelburne tripping, he has apprized him that he will quit, and the other has agreed to it, with every seeming profession of cordiality; and thus matters stand.

My opinion, from all whom I have seen, is that Fox has undone himself with the public; and his most intimate friends seem of the same opinion. I am now to request and desire of you, in the strongest terms, not to return from France till you hear further from me. Fox tells me, that you (being envoy) cannot come without the King's leave; and I must entreat of you, for the sake of the public, and of that Ministry which I trust and hope will still stand its ground, for the great and important objects which we had in view in March last—let me

add, for your own sake—do not spread the alarm of returning till you hear from me again, which you certainly shall in a very short period. With every anxious hope and wish that affection can form,

I am,
My dear brother,
Ever yours,
N. T.

I am anxious to inform you that the Duke of Richmond has pressed me to take the Secretary of State, as named by all our Whig friends; and I shall accept.* This is another reason for wishing you to stay till a few days clear up all our doubts and difficulties, in which I need not say how happy I shall be to see you so, and how cordially I love and esteem you. Adieu, my dear Tom.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Thursday, July 4th, 1782.

My dear Grenville,

Knowing that you very much dislike your situation, I don't know how to call ill news what I am now going to inform you of. Charles has this day resigned the seals; as he is much engaged, I have undertaken to let you know this event, and make the last exercise of our office the sending a messenger to you, as it would certainly be unfair to lose a single hour in assisting you in your release. I understand you cannot leave Paris without leave from hence, as you have the King's commission; but by sending this to you directly, it will be in your own hands to require that leave in as peremptory terms as you please.

* This first part of the postscript is written in cypher.

What relates to Lord Rockingham's death you are informed of. The day before it happened Charles made a question in the Cabinet on the policy of not reserving the Independence of America as a matter of treaty and the price of a peace, but to grant it at once unconditionally; on which he was beat. And immediately on Lord Rockingham's death, Lord Shelburne informs them that he is to be First Lord of the Treasury and the King's Minister, though *against his wish*, &c., &c. They proposed the Duke of Portland, which the King refused; and after a great deal of idle negotiation, in which it was evident there was no power left with our friends, the measure of to-day was determined on. Lord John Cavendish goes out with Charles, Keppel follows; but, to his shame, in my opinion, the *Duke of Richmond*, I believe, will remain. Mr. Pitt joins Shelburne, and will be either Chancellor of the Exchequer or Secretary of State. For the rest, it is not known whether they will make up out of the old set, or take all new. Conway also will stay. But still, those who go are right; for there is really no other question but whether, having lost their power, they ought to stay and lose their characters. And so begins a new Opposition; but wofully thinned and disconcerted, I fear. I am sure, however, that you will think what has been done was right. Fitzpatrick is here, but returning to Ireland; where, however, neither he nor the Duke will remain.

I write in great haste, which you must excuse.

Yours ever truly,

R. B. Sheridan.

What you hear of Cornwallis having lost some transports, is a matter of no magnitude.

MR. FOX TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Dear Grenville,

You will not wonder at my being hurried too much at this moment to write you a detail of what has happened. I do assure you that the thing that has given me most concern, is the sort of scrape I have drawn you into; but I think I may depend upon your way of thinking for forgiving me; though to say one can depend upon any man, is a bold word, after what has passed within these few days. I am sure, on the other hand, that you may depend upon my eternal gratitude to you for what you have undergone on my account, and that you always must have the greatest share in my friendship and affection. I do not think you will think these [less] valuable than you used to do. I have done right, I am sure I have. The Duke of Richmond thinks very much otherwise, and will do wrong; I cannot help it. I am sure my staying would have been a means of deceiving the public and betraying my party; and these are things not to be done for the sake of any supposed temporary good. I feel that my situation in the country, my power, my popularity, my consequence, nay, my character, are all risked; but I have done right, and therefore in the end it must turn out to have been wise. If this fail me, the pillared firmament is rottenness, and earth's base built on stubble.

Adieu. Your brother disapproves too.

Yours most affectionately,

C. J. Fox.

St. James's, July 5th, 1782.

MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO MR. FOX.

(Private.) Paris, July 9th, 1782.

Dear Charles,

You apologize for writing me only a few lines; I shall write you still fewer, and make no apology; for after what has passed, I count every minute that the messenger is getting

ready to return, as so much time lost, however it is employed. You are sorry you have drawn me into a scrape; I know of none, at least none that an honest man could keep out of, or need be either sorry or ashamed to have got into; neither do I see what you have to regret in any part of this business, farther than the late hour in which it was done. You know my system upon that subject, and how firmly it was my opinion that you should not have lost one moment, to fight the battle with advantage, which, with or without, everybody saw must be to be fought; but, as long as it is fought honourably, it is sure to be successful in the end, for one day or other, right will always come right.

I suppose I need not tell you that I have answered Lord Shelburne's letter by the official information he desires, adding to it "my fixed purpose firmly to decline any farther prosecution of this business, and requesting him, as speedily as may be, to lay before His Majesty, in all duty and humility, my earnest and unalterable prayer that he will be graciously pleased to recal me from the commission I am honoured with at Paris."

I write too to beg my brother to press my immediate return. I see by his letter he knows nothing of what has passed. If you would show him my letter to you, at my request, under the strictest confidence, he will be apprized of the true state much sooner than if he waits till I come, when I shall certainly tell him; this, however, is at your own choice, if you had rather wait till I come.

Adieu. Pray thank Sheridan for his letter. I will write the first moment my messenger is gone. Well, what a time to be out of England! *et Montauciel n'y était pas!* I don't think I can quite forgive you. No news here. They say they have taken eighteen transports from us, but they are not yet come into Brest.

Yours most affectionately,

T. Grenville.

MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Paris, July 9th, 1782.

My dearest Brother,

Your letter was given to me last night, and since I have been able to read I never felt so much agitated. I hastily send back the messenger, but he carries with him a letter to Lord Shelburne, in which I formally request my immediate recal.

My dear brother, you do not know my situation, or you would see in the first instant, as you will so soon as I can speak to you, that if I continued at Paris, I should be the meanest and most contemptible wretch that was ever born into the world; I should falsify my word, I should betray my honour, I should repay the confidence that was reposed in me with the most cowardly treachery, I should disgrace every feeling that is honourable and respectable between man and man. I have no choice; my immediate return is as much a duty and obligation upon me as can in human society be laid upon one who would not renounce the character of a gentleman. Judge, then, of the distressful situation I must have been in at the time of decyphering your last lines, and judge how sacred and indispensable those circumstances must be, that do not give me even room to hesitate in a difficulty of so much delicacy. I love you, my dearest brother, with the truest and sincerest affection; my pride and ambition are ten-fold more gratified in your situation of life than in any that could be mine; nor, so help me God! do I think there is an interest, an advantage, present or future, that I would not gladly sacrifice for you, if it could add one step to your greatness; but you love me too well not to shrink at the thought of my disgracing myself, and a fouler disgrace there could not be, than I should inevitably incur by staying at Paris as Minister.

One part of my difficulty you see already; it is that I dare

not write even in cypher, what would save me all the embarrassment of this letter, and you the uneasiness of its obscurity, till I see you. My dear brother, reflect, if it is not too late, upon the opinions we have held in common, upon the judgment we have formed in common, of the rectitude and integrity of some men, and the utter and absolute want of it in others. Recollect, if it is possible, the uneasiness that you felt, the doubt that you expressed and I made light of, in the very last conversations we had together. Think over all that might have happened, and be persuaded that all has; think over the most pleasing parts of your last letter, and be persuaded that a few plain words, whenever I see you, will make you blot it out with indignation. But above all, I do conjure you, in the most solemn terms, to guard against expressing the surmises this letter may suggest to you, and to drop no word of suspicion or jealousy till I see you. The caution of this letter—to which I dare not add a cypher, however it must grieve me to speak to you in the dark—every circumstance, must show you how deeply my honour, how much more deeply than human wisdom could apprehend, my honour is involved in this business.

One word more, though I think every minute an hour till the messenger is gone. Trust me till you hear me; and above all, if you are applied to to persuade me to stay, do not think of so doing; it may make the delay of one post, and that will hurt me; it can do no more.

God Almighty bless you, my dearest brother; a warmer affection no man can bear you. Think of all my impatience to see you, and do not forget that in pressing my recal, you do me a more essential and honourable service than you know. Once more, God bless you, my dearest brother.

Before Lord Temple had received this letter he had declined the secretaryship, and accepted the appointment of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, his brother, Mr. William

Wyndham Grenville (afterwards Lord Grenville) accompanying him as Chief Secretary. In the reply that follows, Lord Temple expresses the profound sorrow he felt at his brother's determination to resign, of which he was confessedly not in a position to form a competent judgment.

LORD TEMPLE TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Pall Mall, July 12th, Eleven, P.M.

I have received your letter, my dearest brother, which has sensibly—I need not say how sensibly—affected me. My letter to you did not propose to decide upon the propriety of the great question, whether you should or not continue to keep the character in which you are now employed; of that I could be no judge. The total and absolute ignorance in which I have remained, since you left England, of what was passing at Paris, and the total want of information of what was passing here, so far as concerned your mission, make me wholly incompetent to the question; of that you must be the judge, and I trust and hope that your decision will stand every test. My object was solely to prevent the possibility of your coming away precipitately, and so far my point is gained. I will say nothing of the cruel situation in which I stand; I feel it most bitterly, and feel it the more because my affection to you has no bounds. I am not Secretary at State; but think, my dearest brother, what must have been my feelings, if I had (as was much pressed upon me from every quarter) accepted that department to which your negotiation was more immediately annexed, in confidence that you would have done that for me which you have done for Mr. Fox. If I had listened to that persuasion (and surely my heart might have prompted me to have done so), I might have had the mortification of finding myself in a situation which

I can hardly think of without the most violent agitation; the voice of every one had pointed out to me that department; and every reason, public and private, seemed to call me to it. Think this over, my dearest brother, and tell me if the ties of private friendship are such as would have justified you to your own feelings for fixing upon me a disgrace, the extent of which I shudder at.

I know, I feel, that you love me; but, great God! to what have you exposed me! and, much as you value Mr. Fox, am I to think (good God! after the uniform affection, which has never felt more truly for you than at this hour) that you trust your honour and reputation in his hands to an extent that knows no bounds; and that the moment which calls upon you to withdraw yourself from your situation, is that which possibly had put your brother in that confidential public situation in which I trusted he had stood with you in private life? I cannot dwell upon this. I would have fought your quarrels, I would have felt with you every reason which may have induced you to urge this recal, possibly very prudently, justly, and honourably; but it was not necessary to convince every member of the Cabinet, that your honour, safe in the hands of Mr. Fox, was not so in mine. Good God! my dearest brother, loving me as you do, and knowing how I prize and value you, think over this picture of possibilities, and join with me (which is all I will ever say to you on a subject which cuts me to the very heart) in the happiness I feel, that motives, in which I will say that considerations for your credit, your honour, and your ease, were decisive, determined me to reject the first and to accept a second proposition. That die is cast; my opinion, my reputation, and my honour are pledged to it. I will believe, because it is my only joy at such a crisis, that your affections beat as highly to what conduces to my honour and situation as ever I could wish; and tell me, my dearest brother, if the whole tenor and every hour of my life has not proved to you

how I valued your confidence, and how truly it would be my pride to consult your advancement; and if in taking this situation I have consulted what was most for the honour and ease of every one of my family, if I have peculiarly consulted the possible delicacy of your situation, and have sacrificed every favourite passion of my heart to it, think what my present feelings are, in the uncertainty of the extent of those sacrifices which you may still think yourself obliged to make. The thought, my dearest brother, distracts me; I hint it to you, but I shall not feel a moment's happiness till I see you. My letter is dreadfully incoherent, but it will paint to you the agitation of a mind struggling for its dearest and nearest object—the affection of a brother, whom from my childhood I have pressed nearest to my heart.—I cannot go on.

I called upon Lord Shelburne the moment I had your letter, and saw him soon after. I carefully obeyed *every injunction*, and pressed your immediate recal. He stated the necessity of calling a Cabinet, as he could not take it upon himself, and the King does not return to town till Wednesday. I urged it with every eagerness, and have prevailed that a leave of absence shall be granted to you to come away immediately, and this to prevent public mischief. But it is understood that you resign the commission on your arrival here. I have prevailed that the messenger is to return very early to-morrow morning; and most ardently do I wish to annihilate the next eight tedious days. Feel for me, my dear brother; consult your reason and your affection, and let me hope that you will feel that satisfaction which every one of my family most earnestly feels at my acceptance of the Lieutenancy of Ireland. You know what follows, and you will have time to think it over; but I conjure you, by everything which you prize nearest and dearest to your heart, by the joy I have ever felt for your welfare, by the interest I have ever taken in your uneasiness, weigh well your determination; it decides upon the complexion of my future

hours. I am jealous and nice of your honour more than of my own; but think that I have staked my happiness upon this cast; and may God direct you, my dearest brother, to the only answer which can convince me that your esteem and affection equals that which I have ever borne you. God ever bless you.

RESIGNED.

Mr. Fox.
Lord J. Cavendish,
Mr. Burke.
Lord Robert Spencer.
Lord Althorpe.
Lord Dungannon.
Mr. Townshend.
Mr. Montagu.
Mr. Lee.

These are all who have resigned.

APPOINTED.

Lord Shelburne . . .	*Treasury.*
Mr. T. Grenville . .	*Ditto.*
Mr. Jackson	*Ditto.*
Mr. Elliott	*Ditto.*
Mr. Pitt	*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*
Mr. T. Townshend . .	*Secretary of State, Home Department.*
Lord Grantham . . .	*Ditto, Foreign Department.*
Sir G. Yonge . . .	*Secretary-at-War.*
Mr. Aubrey	*Admiralty.*
Mr. Pratt.	*Admiralty.*
Lord C. Spencer . .	*Vice-Treasurer.*
Colonel Barré . . .	*Paymaster.*
Vacant	*Treasurer of the Navy.*
Ditto	*Solicitor-General.*

Duke of Richmond . .
Duke of Grafton . .
Lord Camden . . . } *Continue in their offices.*
Lord Keppell . . .
General Conway . .

Mr. Sheridan's name should be included in the above list of resignations. The vacancies of the Treasurership of the Navy and the Solicitor-Generalship were respectively filled by Mr. Dundas, afterwards Viscount Melville, and Mr. Pepper Arden, afterwards Lord Alvanley.

MR. FOX TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Dear Grenville,

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your kind letter; and indeed, if political transactions put one out of humour with *many*, they make one love the *few* who do act and think right so much better that it is some compensation. I understand a messenger is just going, by whom I send this letter; he will bring you others, from whence you will learn that your brother is going Lord-Lieutenant to Ireland. If you go with him as Secretary, I hope you will be so good as to endeavour to serve my friend Dickson, who by this change has for the third time missed a Bishopric.

I called upon your brother yesterday, and left with him the letters that passed between you and me, explaining that it was at your desire that I did so. I was very glad to have your authority for this step, for to tell you the truth, I was very much inclined to take it even of my own when it was supposed he was to be my successor; now that he knows the whole of the narration, if he still chooses (as I fear he will) to go into this den of thieves neither you nor I have anything to answer

for. If this transaction had been withheld from him, he might have had reason to complain of me, but much more of you. I have not heard from him since he has been *au fait*. His expressions, both to me personally and to the party, were so kind, that I am far from considering him as lost; but whether he is or not, and whatever part your situation may make it right for you to take in politics, I shall always depend upon your friendship and kindness to me as perfectly unalterable; and I do assure you that this consideration is one of the things that most contributes to keep up my spirits in this very trying situation.

Yours affectionately,

C. J. Fox.

Grafton Street, July 13th, 1782.

Lord Temple entered upon the Government of Ireland at a crisis of serious agitation. A short time before, under the Duke of Portland's Administration, a Bill had passed the Imperial Parliament, recognizing in full and in the most explicit manner the sole and exclusive right of the Parliament of Ireland to make laws for Ireland—establishing and affirming, in fact, the perfect independence of Ireland, legislative, judicial and commercial. This Bill had given complete satisfaction to the popular leaders. Even the Volunteers declared themselves appeased, and adopted final resolutions to that effect. But the factious and jealous spirit of the Irish was subsequently disturbed by indications on the part of the English Legislature of a disposition to depart in some particulars from this settlement, and by the unfortunate incident of some Irish appeals which lay over for judgment in England, the authority to adjudicate them having been relinquished, or disavowed, by the

measure alluded to. The whole matter turned upon distinctions, but they were sufficient to influence the distrust of the turbulent, who were ready to seize upon any excuse for expressing their impatience of English authority. The introduction of a singular Bill by Lord Abingdon, having for its object the assertion of the sole and exclusive right of Great Britain to regulate her external commerce, and that of all countries under her sovereignty, and repealing so much of the former Bill as took that power out of the Parliament of Great Britain and vested it in the Parliament of Ireland, had the effect of affording an abundant pretext to the uneasiness which was now beginning to grow up in Ireland, and which Mr. Grattan exerted his utmost influence to dispel. Want of confidence, also, in the sincerity of Lord Shelburne's Ministry yielded an additional ground for national discontent. "Things were never more unsettled than they are at present," Mr. Perry writes to Mr. Grattan, in October, 1782; "some of the Ministry here are at open enmity with each other, and everybody seems to distrust the head." Such was the state of their affairs when Mr. William Wyndham Grenville came over to London to communicate confidentially with the Government on the part of his brother, the Lord-Lieutenant. The correspondence in which he details from day to day the results of his interviews with Ministers, and his observations upon the net-work of small difficulties in which he was involved by the want of unity in the Cabinet—especially between Mr. Townshend and Lord Shelburne on the Irish questions—is minute and voluminous; and

only a few letters have been selected from the mass to show the course of ministerial diplomacy in reference to the equivocal relations subsisting at that period between the two countries. They form a running commentary upon a curious passage in Irish history; and although the circumstances to which they relate have long been completely disposed of, the Union having obliterated all the matters in dispute, the insight which they give us into the detail of Cabinet discussions, the occasional traits they bring to light of the characters of public men, and the calm and luminous views they develope of the distracting politics of Ireland, confer a permanent interest upon them. Two facts, by no means unimportant, are established in these letters—namely, the lively and judicious anxiety Lord Temple and his brother uniformly felt in their endeavours to restore the tranquillity of Ireland, and the impediments they met in their strenuous efforts to preserve the faith and honour of England in her transactions with that country.

MR. W. WYNDHAM GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Nov. 27th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I saw Townshend on the evening of my arrival here, which was Sunday. Lord Shelburne was then out of town, so that I was of course obliged to state what I had to say to Townshend alone. This I did very fully, in a conversation which lasted near two hours, and in which, to say truth, Townshend bore a less part than I expected and could have wished. What he did say was, however, very fair and explicit. He expressed a strong determination in the King's servants to give you every possible support. He had found *no* opportunity (as I under-

stood him) of convening a Cabinet on the affairs of Ireland, but had talked separately with all the Ministers upon the subject, and found in them no difference of opinion, except perhaps in General Conway, whom he thought "a little influenced by his nephew's pamphlet, and by his own natural temper, to look towards further concession." He saw little difficulty in what you wished; thought you best able to judge of the propriety of the moment for such a measure; and said it was the King's opinion, as well as his own, "that where there was not some marked difference of opinion, the Lord-Lieutenant should be *left to himself*, without however being *abandoned*." I stated to him pretty strongly the effect of the ideas of changes of men and opinions in this country. On that point, as far as related to men, I could get little or nothing from him, although I recurred to it more than once. At last he said that the same effects were felt here, and would be so till Government should show a sufficient strength and consistency in Parliament. Scarce anything more passed on his side, except strong expressions of personal regard to you, and a warm encomium on the Duke of Portland, and the language held by him on your subject, and on that of the state of Ireland.

He gave me hopes of seeing Lord Shelburne the next day; but the great man was at his recess at Streatham, and was not visible till yesterday. When I went to him, he began with unbounded expressions of a determination to support you as long as he had anything to do here. He understood that you went in great measure at his request, and therefore he considered it as common cause. He begged that his silence might never be construed into indolence or timidity: the subject was never off his mind. As a proof, he mentioned his former silence, at which you was alarmed, and its being followed by the most explicit declarations, in which you had professed yourself fully satisfied. After a great deal more of such verbiage, I stated your wish as to the dissolution. He objected strongly to

the taking so capital a step till something was decided about the negotiation at Paris. If the war should continue, it would be necessary to determine on some plan suited to such an event. But if we had peace, the advantages to Government in Ireland would be great and almost infinite. Such an event would throw the Volunteers upon their backs, would bring back the army to that country and to this, and would also bring the fleet into the Channel. He dwelt very much on the great advantage of not being obliged to meet the Parliament till October, and when I hinted at the possible necessity of a contrary resolution, he argued strongly, and I think satisfactorily, against such a measure. He then concluded the conversation, expressing a perfect readiness to hear me again more at large on the subject. Seeing that he would not hear any more at that time, I ended with saying that I was not commissioned to state decisively your sentiments on this very unexpected event, but that I was sure you would feel much disappointed if a measure which you thought so necessary was postponed without the most serious consideration and the most urgent reasons. His answer was, that you might depend upon it that whatever determination was made on the subject would be most seriously weighed, and taken on the best grounds. He then told me that a Cabinet should be held to-day, to take the business into consideration.

To-day I dined with him, and saw both him and Townshend after dinner. They both stated in the strongest manner the inconvenience of so decisive a measure whilst a subject was in agitation, and must be decided in a very few days, on which the whole line and plan of your Government will have to depend. For these reasons, they said it had been judged most proper to postpone the Cabinet till something arrived from Paris. I ended my conversation with Lord Shelburne by saying, that in the event of war, I did not see how, after this delay, it would be possible to resist; and that in that light it was my duty to discharge my commission from you, and to state my own

sentiments as far as they could have any weight, that a few days might do more mischief in Ireland than many years would be able to repair. *Liberari animans meam.* To this he replied, that I had done my part fairly, and that *he would be answerable for the event.*

After all this detail, you will possibly wish to know my sentiments upon the subject. From the whole of Lord Shelburne's manner, I think that he is inclined to deal very fairly by you, for his own sake. I have no doubt, from the style of his conversation, that he is determined, in the present situation of things, to stand the ground against concessions, and this both from his own opinions and those of the King. But he certainly either does not see, or affects not to see, the situation of Ireland in that very alarming light in which it must be viewed by every man acquainted with it.

As to the measure of the dissolution, I think you will agree with him, that if we were sure of the favourable event, the delay would not prove near so prejudicial on the one hand, as it would be advantageous on the other. And from the language he holds, I am persuaded, and Jemmy agrees with me in opinion, that he is convinced that they will have their peace. On the other hand, I cannot but say, that if the war continues, we shall be in an awkward situation. The whole depends on the greater or less probability of peace, to which we are neither of us competent to decide; and I have thrown, if not the disagreeable consequences, at least the responsibility of the measure on him.

In this situation of things, I thought you would rather choose that I should remain here to give you the very first moment of news, and to press then a Cabinet upon the affairs of Ireland in general, than that I should run back to you in our present uncertainty. You will observe, that although I have rather expressed myself to you satisfied with the affair, I have taken infinite pains not to let it appear to them; but on

the contrary, have left Lord Shelburne in no small uneasiness about the manner in which you may take it; so that if you should be dissatisfied, I have by no means pledged you. If you think with me, the whole merit of it will lay at your door.

I desired Townshend to state to the King that I was ready to obey His Majesty's commands, if he wished to ask me any questions. He told me to-day that the King expressed himself perfectly ready to give me an audience *if I wished for one*. This I thought was better declined. I shall go to the levée on Friday, and shall be very impatient for your answer to this long detail.

Whatever your opinion may be of the line of conduct which I have held, I trust you will do justice to my zeal for your interests and honour, inseparably connected as they are, and I hope will ever remain, with my own, and to the sincere affection with which I am,

Ever most truly yours,
W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Saturday, Nov. 30th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I have just been with Townshend, who sent for me on the subject of a despatch from you, relating to the proceedings in the King's Bench here, on an Irish cause.

I have seen Troward, the attorney concerned in the cause, and from him have learnt, what you probably know by this time, that the case has been argued here, and the judgment of the Court in Ireland affirmed; so that nothing can be done in it here, especially as the Term has been over these two days. It is impossible not to see the use which will be made in

Ireland of this unlucky business. You say nothing in your letter to Townshend of the Protest, nor have I heard a word on that or any other subject from Ireland since I have been here. But I much fear that the alarm among the Bar, upon a point which affects their private interests as well as their national pride, will have prevented, or in great measure impeded its being signed. The only grounds that you can take, as far at least as I can see, are those which I have desired Townshend to insert in his answer. The Bill of Exceptions was certified from an Irish Court. It has been depending eighteen months. The objection to the jurisdiction was never started. The King's Bench in Ireland either has been applied to or will be so next Term, to grant a writ of possession on the affirmance of the English Court. This will of course be denied them, and the whole English proceeding treated as waste paper. No Judge will allow—no sheriff will execute, any English process. No man will again be so absurd as to subject himself to a considerable expense to obtain a judgment of no more effect than the decisions of a Prussian court-martial would be as to a question of property here.

Still, however, I am far from being insensible to the clamour which will be raised, and to the advantage which will be taken of the opinion of the Court here, that their jurisdiction still remains, notwithstanding the Irish Act to the contrary. Possibly you may find it necessary to hold out some solution; and perhaps you will think the opportunity is not a bad one to cut the ground still more decisively from under Mr. Flood's feet than even by the proposed resolutions. What I mean is, the passing a bill here which should in the preamble declare the repeal to have been a renunciation of the rights formerly exercised by this kingdom over Ireland, and should enact that *therefore* for the future, no writ of error, &c., &c., should be received, signed or determined in any of the King's Courts of Justice in

this country. If this idea should please you, it might be done immediately, and you might settle the words with Yelverton or Burgh.

If you think this too like a concession, you might hold out the idea of an Act to be passed in Ireland, inflicting the penalties of a *præmunire* against any persons seeking justice out of the kingdom; in imitation of the old statutes against ecclesiastics applying to the papal authority.

Lord Shelburne threw out to me the other day, but when I could not ask him any more upon the subject, the idea of a paragraph about Ireland in the King's Speech. I have writ to Townshend to-day, to desire that if this idea is pursued, he will let me see it before the words are finally determined upon. I think such a paragraph may have a good effect; because, when re-echoed in the addresses, it will include the three branches.

I am waiting with the most anxious expectation the decision of the great question—peace or war? Reports are hourly circulated on both sides, but nothing is known from any authority. I need not say, that the moment it is known, I will send it off.

I know no more of the East India business than you will see in the papers. I was so intent on this, that I forgot to ask Townshend to-day about it.

I shall most probably be with you before you can answer this, as the 5th is the day for the meeting. But if they should again prorogue the Parliament, and wish me to stay, supposing the point not decided, what shall I do?

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Townshend and Conway have both been plaguing me about Murray, who wanted to raise a corps in the North. It seems

he is an Irishman, with considerable connexions in the North Talbot's inspection makes a figure in the papers.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

(Most Secret and Private.) Pall Mall, Monday, Dec. 2nd, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I told you, in my last letter, that Lord Shelburne had thrown out to me the idea of a paragraph in the King's Speech on the subject of Ireland, and that I had applied to Townshend, that I might see it before it was decided upon. In consequence of this, I received, through him, a message from Lord Shelburne, desiring to see me this morning. I have just been with him. He made his excuses to me as soon as I came in, for having appointed me at a time when he should only be able to converse with me for *a very short time*, as unexpected business had occurred. He then took out the Speech, and read to me the sentence in question, which is nearly this: The liberal spirit of your measures respecting the commerce of Ireland, confirmed by the rest of your conduct towards her, meets with my full approbation and concurrence; and I should recommend to you a general revision of the trade laws of this kingdom on the same extended principles. I own this did not strike me as being sufficiently extensive. I mentioned the insertion of the word rights—commerce and rights—but he did not at all seem to give into it. He said that we were not ripe for that; that the best thing that could be done was that we should adhere exactly to the settlement; that it was a bond from which we ought in no instance to depart; and that a steady Government would enable us to stand to it in Ireland as well as here. Above all, he said he looked to the effects of a full confidence between you and himself, which union and concurrence would be more important for Government than any other point whatever—that it gave more strength than even abilities or weight. With

this I closed in, seeing it in vain to push the other, and told him that the appearance of confidence and support here would, I was convinced, assist you more than even the adoption of any specific measure; that in the case of a peace, I did not doubt that you would be sufficiently strong to carry on your Government with ease, but that I could not answer for the event of a continuance of the war. He answered, that the situation of Ireland weighed very materially with him in his wishes for peace, and that, although he never wished to shift off responsibility, yet he trusted in your integrity and honour; that, if he found it necessary, he should be enabled to state that part of the subject from the best authority. To this I thought myself justified in answering, that most certainly you would never abandon a ground which you had already stated to him, and which every hour made clearer to you; and that such a consideration certainly ought to weigh with Government in making the peace.

He then went on to say, that he had in general no doubt but that you would find your Government easy and prosperous; he enumerated the advantages with which you will meet the Parliament *in October*—a settled ministry here, things arranged in Ireland, the Parliament fully canvassed, and possibly a peace. I said, that when I saw him before, I had stated the possibility of your being driven to meet the Parliament in the spring; that I had stated it as a possible evil; and that I wished to explain to him that the necessity of this would by no means be affected either way by the difference between an immediate dissolution, and that which must take place before the March assizes. To this he by no means agreed; as a dissolution late in February would, he said, by the time the elections were over, bring us far on towards the summer months. He then reverted to his opinion as to the probability of your having a smooth and easy Government. It was his idea, he said, that real commotion never was produced but by

real grievances. My answer was, that the people of Ireland did suffer real misery, which, as was frequently the case, they would impute to Government, however little founded such an idea would be. This, he said, would lead us at length into a disquisition on the state of Ireland, on which subject he intended, before I went, to have a long conversation with me, but that he was now too much pressed.

After this, I thought I could not, with any propriety, prolong my visit. Since I wrote the above, I have seen Townshend. He agrees perfectly in opinion with me, that the mention of the commerce, with so very general a reference to the constitutional part of the question, could produce no good effect in Ireland, and might be made an invidious use of. He threw out the idea of omitting the paragraph entirely; and most certainly, if Lord Shelburne sees, or thinks he sees, any objection to being more explicit on the subject, I know no necessity whatever for saying a word about it. It certainly will produce debate on the affairs of Ireland, which is much to be avoided; and in the form in which it now stands, or indeed in any into which it could be thrown, so as to form part of the King's Speech, it would be of no advantage to us in Ireland, whilst it would afford ground of cavil and objection to our enemies. In this idea, I have written to Lord Shelburne, to desire to see him again; but as he may possibly appoint me for to-morrow, and you must be impatient to hear from England, I shall not detain the messenger.

With respect to that cursed cause, I hardly know what to say: it must have set you very much afloat, particularly with the lawyers who are interested in the question. In my last letter, I threw out the idea of a bill in this country to prevent the receiving or hearing Irish causes in the English courts. I have shown to Townshend the draught of such a bill, which I enclose to you with this letter. I believe his disposition is most real and unaffected, to leave the management of the whole

Irish business to you, and to support you honestly and fairly in whatever measures you adopt. But it is not difficult to see that the whole administration and business of Government *roule sur bien un autre pivot*. As far as one can separate Lord Shelburne's intentions from his verbiage and professions, I think I see a strong disposition to resist the least tendency towards any further concession, or even to the appearance of it. On the contrary, if any very good opportunity should offer itself, I should think him more inclined to lessen than to extend. He either has, or affects, an opinion very different from that which I hold out to him with respect to the difficulties of your Government, and exclaims even against the possibility of your being driven from your ground. I can't say that I think this situation between your official Minister and the real Premier quite pleasant, because it seems to me that the despatches of the one, however explicit, being all written without the concurrence of the Cabinet, do not pledge the opinions of the other, which are, after all, the only opinions which are of any consequence.

I believe I stated to you in my last the reason which Townshend gave to me, and which Lord Shelburne assigned to Jemmy, for not calling a Cabinet immediately on my arrival, namely, their unwillingness to meet them before they had news from Paris, because they had been hitherto unanimous, and hoped to meet Parliament so; and if they were called upon the subject of Ireland, nobody knows what other hare might be started there, however they might agree upon Irish affairs. You will certainly think the mode of keeping a Cabinet unanimous, by never meeting them at all, an excellent one; however, in the situation of things here, I did not think it would be decent in me to distress Government, especially as I really think the propriety of the dissolution at this moment depends much on the event of the business at Paris. I have therefore contented myself with an explicit assurance from Townshend, that when news of that arrives, which is now most

anxiously expected every hour, a Cabinet shall be held, to go into the whole line of Irish business.

Townshend showed me his despatches on the subject of the embargo, and of this Irish cause, both of which the King has seen, but I believe, no one else. The idea of the resolutions not being proposed till your wish was known, was suggested to him by me, because, if you should be driven—and things certainly verge towards it—to any further concession, you will not be much assisted by those two resolutions standing on the journals in array against you. But I believe the attention of every one here will be so much employed by the great point of peace or war, that there will be very little room for Irish politics, either in the House of Commons or the House of Lords.

I asked Townshend, an hour ago, whether there was anything from Paris; and he told me explicitly that they knew nothing at all, but was in most anxious expectation. The Parliament certainly meets on Thursday. I think, from the style of their language, and particularly from Lord Shelburne's trying to make me pledge you to it, that they are confident of a peace; and certainly, if they have it not, their situation is very precarious, to say no more of it. If they do meet Parliament with a peace, I am persuaded they will stand their ground. The country gentlemen hold in general rather a friendly language than otherwise. I shall certainly now stay over Thursday; but after that, get back to you as soon as I can.

Lord Mahon has been with me, and is outrageous about the Duke of Leinster. He wanted me to engage that Government would give them land if the other offers failed; but I begged to decline.

I have received the enclosed from Talbot, and have also sent you my answer, which you will forward or not, as you think right.

Lord Nugent is out of all patience with you for not answering his letter. Adieu.

Believe me,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

I have not given you the words of the Speech exactly, but nearly. Yorke and Banks move in the House of Commons; Lord Carmarthen and —— in the House of Lords.

You will probably think it right to write to Lord Shelburne, stating the difficulties of your situation at full length; because I think his idea of ease and smoothness ought by no means to remain uncontradicted. If you do that, I should think it would not be amiss to say something about a peace, for he evidently meant that I should have pledged you to that, and to acknowledge his professions, which have been boundless and unlimited.

I should think it would be also an act of real justice to Townshend to say something to him about his conduct towards you, which I think as honourable and friendly as possible. If one could but join the power of the one with the integrity of the other!

What answer will you give about your stopping the English recruiting parties *car l'on est un peu choqué la-dessus?*

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Dec. 5th, Eleven at Night.

My dear Brother,

In consequence of their having altered their minds about Ireland, I was summoned to give my opinion. I think the words as they stand now are sufficiently strong, and they passed to-night without the least animadversion: "The liberal

principles adopted by you with respect to the rights and commerce of Ireland, do you the highest honour, and must, I trust, ensure that harmony which ought ever to subsist between the two kingdoms."

We have had no division to-night. The speakers, Lord N., Fox, Burke, Townshend and Pitt.

Lord N. uncommonly well, holding off from both sides. Fox and Pitt both worse than usual. The chief debate about peace. The giving up Gibraltar was thrown out by Banks, and strongly objected to by Lord N., Burke, and Fox.

Johnstone made an attack upon Lord Howe, which was as ill received as it deserved to be. I would have sent you a copy of the King's Speech, but it is so uncommonly long, that it is not out yet. It is utterly impossible to travel through the great variety of matter which it comprehends. Remarkably full house.

Bulkeley was in the House of Lords; says that Shelburne acquitted himself very well. Lord Stormont attacked him about the Independence. He defended it as the wish of the people. Lord Fitzgerald spoke but badly. No division there.

Ever yours,
W. W. G.

Keith Stewart answered Johnstone, defending Lord Howe very warmly. Everybody who spoke after Johnstone reprobated him. Duke of Richmond attacked Lord Sandwich.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Saturday, Dec. 7th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I received your packet late on Thursday night, or rather, I believe, early on Friday morning. As soon as I was up I sent the enclosed letter to Lord Shelburne and to Townshend. I

received from Lord Shelburne an answer appointing me in an hour's time.

When I went there, after waiting a considerable time (which I can easily excuse when I reflect upon the business of this moment), I was shown into a room, where he was with Townshend. It is difficult for me to say whether I was more surprised or mortified at his telling me, as soon as I came in, that he could only see me for a minute or two. He then entered upon the subject of your letter, by saying that he had not read Mr. Townshend's despatches, but only your letter to himself and the bill which you enclosed to Townshend. With respect to the bill, he said nothing could be done without consulting the Chancellor and the other lawyers of the Cabinet; that I must see the Chancellor, and explain the business to him; that the rendering a judgment null might be objected to. I answered that I was persuaded *that* was the part on which you was least bent, and that you would be fully satisfied if the enacting clause went only to prevent any future decisions, provided the preamble expressed the principle. To this he said, that it was impossible to go on if everything of this sort made a necessity for new measures, and that when a ground was once taken, it ought to be stood to. My answer was, that your ground was very materially changed, and that this overturned the only reasoning upon which you had been able to go on at all, namely, the pledging your own personal faith, and the honour of Government here, that the repeal of the G. I. was considered as a renunciation on the part of Great Britain of all legislation and jurisdiction. He asked whether I meant external as well as internal? I said, undoubtedly. He said, that he had understood from your conversation before you went, "that you meant to make your stand upon the external legislation;" and for this he appealed to Townshend, who said he had understood the same. It was impossible for me to contradict this, as it referred to conversations to which I was no party. He said

that he thought you was reasonable upon the subject of the dissolution, and that this other business was not to be taken up suddenly. I asked what then he wished me to do. He told me to wait upon the Chancellor. I objected that the question was not a legal one, but wholly political. I urged the consequences of delay. Still, however, I could get no answer from him, but only that I must go to the Chancellor; and at last he grew so impatient as to leave the room while I was talking, and to tell Townshend that he might find him in his (Lord Shelburne's) office. The whole conversation did not last above four or five minutes at the utmost. I turned to Townshend, and asked him if he thought it possible that the Government of Ireland could go on in this manner. He pressed me to go to the Chancellor, and said that he could tell me, *en ami*, that I should do more good there in three minutes than I could do elsewhere in as many hours.

By the way, I must say here, that by some inaccuracy I must have explained myself very ill to you about Townshend, who seems to me to have acted the most friendly and honest part towards you in the course of the whole business, and who has sacrificed his time to me for an hour or an hour and a half for several days; while during the fortnight I have now been here, I have not seen Lord Shelburne for twenty minutes in the whole.

I have been very particular in detailing the above conversation to you, because I think it opens two things of infinite importance to your personal comfort and your personal honour. I think it extremely plain that the object of Lord Shelburne is to gain time, and that let me press ever so eagerly, *which I shall not fail to do*, still I am not to expect any final answer till the negotiation is settled, and the peace, which they evidently look upon as certain, is secured and announced. What effect these delays may have in Ireland, and what appearance this state of uncertainty must bear to those who know the proposal

you have made, you are best able to judge, but I know enough of it to be very much alarmed. But the second consideration affects me much more, as I think it affects your honour, and my own as involved with it. What I mean is this: I threw out to you in my former letters that Lord Shelburne appears to me much more disposed to narrow than to extend the rights and concessions yielded to Ireland by Great Britain. I think when you compare the evident reluctance he showed to agree to the resolutions first proposed; his telling me that he had thought of a paragraph in the King's Speech to do instead of them; his then showing me a paragraph relating merely to commercial advantages, and his telling me we were not ripe for the word rights; when you compare all this with his evident dislike to this bill, and with the expression stated above about external legislation, it is not very difficult to collect that he means to do nothing till we have peace, and when we have, he means, to use his own expression, to make the stand upon that point.

Possibly I may agree with him, that it might have been well for the general interest of the empire if that ground had originally been explained, decisively taken and maintained. But I am sure I know too well the situation of that country and of this, to think that it can now be held out without the most fatal consequences to both; and I think I know your feelings too well to imagine that you will suffer yourself to be made an instrument of deceiving any man or body of men whatever, still less a whole country, especially in contradiction to the language which you have invariably held, at least as far as I can recollect (ever since you accepted of your situation), both to people in Ireland and to Government here, that the repeal was a complete renunciation.

It is a singular pleasure to me to observe how exactly our ideas have hitherto corresponded since I left you; so that while you have been taking your measures in Ireland, I have been recommending the same to you from hence. If they should

continue to do so in this instance, the line of conduct which I apprehend would be proper for us to adopt on our different posts is this. I am to see the Chancellor to-morrow, and immediately upon leaving him mean to write to Lord Shelburne, pressing him again most eagerly to allow me an opportunity of stating to him *at length* what I have in commission to say to him from you. If he should comply, I will then go into the whole state of Ireland; will mention to him the credit which ought to be given to representations proceeding from you, in preference to those of interested individuals; will enlarge upon the necessity of decision; and will press that a Cabinet may be held in performance of Townshend's promise to me. In the meantime, I should think you would do well to write a letter to Townshend, stating your ideas upon the necessity of good faith, and the impossibility of resistance, even upon the ground of simple repeal, still more upon the more narrow one of external legislation; and desiring an explicit answer *from the Cabinet* on these points. This, if you would entrust me with it, I would suppress in case the Cabinet should have met and come to any satisfactory decision; and if not, I would deliver it to Townshend, with every personal expression to him of regard, &c., &c.

The advantages which I propose by this conduct, and the mode of reasoning upon which I support it, are as follows: In the first place, if it is really their intention to reserve the external legislation, the sooner you know it, and are able to wash your hands of it completely, by returning to England, the more popular you will be in Ireland, and the better ground you will have here, both to your own conscience, and as a man who may be called upon to defend his conduct. You will observe that I take it for granted you agree with me as to the utter impossibility of ever exercising such a right, and the impolicy as well as bad faith of reserving it, to become, like the tea-duty, a ground for contest and ill-blood, without the possi-

bility of advantage. Lord Shelburne seems to imagine that by a peace he should be able to enforce it; you know the contrary, and that the hearts and voices, and even hands, not of the Volunteers only, but of the people, and even of Parliament, would be against it. And with what face, supposing the thing in itself practicable and honest, could we maintain that ground, after having repeatedly stated the contrary, and pledged ourselves to it in resolutions, and now in a bill offered under your recommendation for the English Parliament? In this event, therefore, I think that by an immediate resignation you will have satisfied your own feelings, and at the same time found an honourable solution to a very unpleasant situation—unpleasant from the situation of things there, and possibly not less so from the complexion of affairs here.

If, on the other hand, this measure drives them into an immediate acquiescence with your proposals, you will certainly stand in a much pleasanter situation in Ireland, especially as a peace will give you a fair ground for dissolving the Fencibles, if you think proper, without ever coming to Parliament to vote money for them. The advantages which we shall have from putting an end to this almost intolerable scene of delay and temporizing are obvious; and if the measure comes from Townshend, and is seconded by me, as I shall propose, it will give you all the credit of the adherence to good faith, &c., &c., instead of its being forced upon Government, as it will otherwise be, by Lord Beauchamp, or Commodore Johnstone, or any person disposed to do mischief.

I have said that
O. 1 Fo2c To1B 3Fo3 the complexion of affairs here makes it more unpleasant. Lord Shelburne's c21bc93 193c931m9 is to 70Ic aw6FckT of his amddcol2ct. Rayneval's arrival at his house at eight in the morning was 9m3 I9ms9 to Townshend

evident intention
make cyphers colleagues.
not known

till twelve, nor to others till after four.
31dd 3scd2c, 9mk 3m any of the m3Fckt 31dd oE3ck Em2k.
They be much *pleased they mean
3fcw cannot hc 72af 6dcotcb, but still it is imagined 3fcw 7co9
to remain.
3m k37019. I have had no opportunity of speaking about the Vice-Treasurership since your last letter; I had spoke before.
will observe Barré's place is kept
You sldd mhtck2c Hokket 6doac 1t also Ic63 open.*

Quorsum hæc tendunt, God only knows.

Ever yours,
W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Sunday, Dec. 15th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I am just returned from Lord Shelburne's. He appointed me yesterday to be with him this morning, and I have had a pretty long conversation with him on the subject of Ireland. But it was for the most part so very general, that it is not easy to reduce it to writing.

I began by stating under two distinct heads the original object of my being sent here, and what had since happened. First, that I had been commissioned to explain the grounds on which you had wished to stand against further concessions, your reasons for imagining it doubtful whether that ground could be maintained, and your certain conviction that it could be done only by an immediate dissolution of Parliament. The second point I said was, that, by what had since happened, you apprehended that something further was made necessary, and

* Portions of numerous letters in the correspondence contained in these volumes are written in cypher. The above passage is given merely as a specimen, which will be sufficient to show the character of the cypher.

this was the more evident from the manner in which every one had taken up the business in Ireland.

These two points, of course, led us into a very wide field of conversation. As to the dissolution, I said you certainly would not press the Ministry for any more on the subject, than that, even with a peace, and a remedy to the business of the King's Bench, it should not be delayed beyond the end of January. The great object, he said, was at all events not to meet till October. My answer was, that to you, who were personally to meet the difficulties of an earlier meeting, they certainly would appear quite as strong as they could to him sitting at a distance and speculating upon them. It was therefore by no means a thing to be wished by you, but an evil which circumstances might render necessary. This led me to a mention of several causes of discontent which might arise or be sought for, and which could only be prevented by the Irish Parliament; such as an infringement, for instance, of the East India monopoly. We went, at different periods of the conversation, a good deal into this business. He threw out an idea, which he said had been often mentioned, and for which a foundation was certainly laid in the last resolution of the English Houses on Irish affairs, if we chose to pursue it. This was the fixing, by a sort of treaty, a commercial system between the two countries, and a proportionable contribution to be paid by Ireland for the general protection of the empire.

When I mentioned the objection to this, founded on the impossibility that Ireland could in her present situation contribute such a quota as would hereafter be even infinitely too small for her share, he answered it by stating the possibility of having a tax on some particular article or description of articles applicable to this purpose, which might be so fixed as to be small at present, very small if necessary, but which might increase with the wealth and commerce of Ireland. On this idea of a settlement, our conversation dwelt a good deal. I

expressed my opinion that it would be, in many points of view, a measure of dignity and weight, and particularly advantageous to both countries, as it would leave no ground of contest unexplained. But at the same time I thought the present moment unfavourable for such a step, because it ought not to be taken till Government in Ireland recovered its energy; otherwise, I stated that the wildest idea that could be broached in a newspaper would be adopted by those in whom the real Government of the country resides at the present moment; that, till the Volunteers have in some degree subsided, your Government could only subsist by expedients, painful as such an idea must be to your feelings. I stated also, that if this was to be held out to the country as the satisfaction and security to which they were to look, it would set all their heads afloat forming systems of trade and government; and that it would make the spring meeting absolutely necessary, from the impatience it would excite and the necessity of its being done by Parliament.

From this we went into the present situation of your Government. Upon this he desired to explain himself, and that I would state to you that he was *inclined to think*, not that he *thought*, your Government would go on more easily there than you expected. He alluded to De Retz's maxim: "*Le peuple ne se soulève jamais que quand on l'opprime.*" To the truth of this I agreed perfectly, but said that the people there are really oppressed, and miserable to a degree I had not at all conceived till I went into the country. That nothing was more usual than for the people to mistake the cause of grievances which they really feel, and that this I apprehended to be the case there. In that case, he said, the remedy was at hand; for that an extended commerce and the wisdom of internal regulations, would relieve the evil, and be a pleasant task to your Government. I answered that such remedies must be gradual, while the situation of Ireland was pressing at this moment; and that perhaps

nothing had contributed more to the discontents now prevalent, than the foolish expectations of wealth to be poured like a torrent into the country by a free trade. To this he agreed, but said that laws might certainly be devised by which such remedies might be brought forward and hastened. Then he went into the nature of absentee laws. Direct absentee taxes were, he said, highly objectionable, but many things might be thought of which would produce the effect so reasonably to be wished, that the money arising from land in Ireland should not be spent elsewhere. All methods to raise the value of that land would operate to that effect; because, when the person residing in England saw the means of getting an equivalent, he would certainly prefer an estate at his own door to one in Ireland. Still, however, this would be gradual.

With respect to the Volunteer force, he apprehended less embarrassment from them, because he could not believe that five thousand of them would ever bring themselves to march ten miles together. I said, perhaps not, but that they had each the means of resisting the execution of any law they disliked in their own places of residence; whilst your whole army did not amount, without the Provincials, to six thousand men. And in time of peace, the Provincials were to be disbanded, and only twelve thousand men could be brought back upon the establishment. He asked whether the Provincials could not be made permanent. I said, I apprehended not, and that possibly the attempt would not be wise; for that, although you had, by the most determined perseverance and by an unremitted firmness, carried the point with respect to their being raised, yet I thought that would be sufficient to show the steadiness of Government, without seeking unnecessary grounds of discontent.

There were many other general heads of Irish Government touched upon in the course of the conversation, which I do not now remember. He spoke to the reports about the situation

of English Government. I never heard any man, in the whole course of my life, affirm any one thing more distinctly, positively, and unequivocally, than he did, when he told me that Government were upon a sure foundation here. He said that I was too wise to expect him to explain to me upon what grounds he said this, but that it was upon sure grounds; that there was a moral certainty, and as a rational man he proceeded upon it. This language is the more extraordinary, because the opinion of the world in general, I might say of almost every man in London, is directly the reverse. Either, therefore, Lord Shelburne is (not a dissembler, but) the most abandoned and direct liar upon the face of the earth, or he is deceived himself, too grossly to be imagined, or the whole world besides is deceived. Which of these is the case, time will show, and that only; but I cannot bring myself to imagine that the first is. That he wishes you should believe him secure, I can easily imagine, and that he wishes it very strongly; but that he should therefore be induced to pledge himself to so direct a falsehood, which he must know it was my business to repeat to you, and yours to act upon, and which the event of a few weeks must demonstrate to be false if it is so, exceeds my utmost power of belief. That the Duke of Richmond thinks as Lord Shelburne has expressed himself to me, is, I apprehend, most probable, from the very strong compliments he paid him and the flattering language he held to him in the House of Lords on Friday. But this is mere conjecture. What is certain, on the other hand, is that the explanation given by him in the House of Lords of the American treaty does not tally with that of Pitt, Townshend and Conway in the House of Commons, to which nevertheless the three last have positively pledged their faith and honour, that the Cabinet has been postponed because Lord Shelburne was afraid to meet them, and that the report of the day is that

Lord Shelburne was outvoted there upon the question of Gibraltar.

After we had gone over a great deal of conversation on these subjects for above an hour and a half, he said that we seemed to agree about all the points on which we had touched. I then mentioned the two main objects—the Dissolution, and the Bill of Satisfaction. To the dissolution, he said he imagined no difficulty would be made to-day in the Cabinet which was to be held; as to the other point, he saw much more objection. It cut up the principle on which our stand had been made. People were not ripe in England to go into the whole question again. The moment a bill of that sort was proposed in the House of Commons, every man would have to give his opinion on the effect of the repeal, on the legal question, and on the right of internal and external legislation. There never was a debate on Irish questions in England that was not misrepresented; and this, together with the acknowledgment of the principle of the insufficiency of what was done last year, would put Mr. Flood on excellent ground. To many of these objections I could not but subscribe, for they strike me very strongly. I wished to know from him his idea on the external legislation. He said he had understood you, when you left England, that you was determined never to cede that. I said, that as his Lordship referred to conversations to which I was no party, I could only say that I had understood you very differently. The distinction between external and internal, he said, was a bad one, as applied to Ireland. It was applied by Fox, who took it from Lord Chatham, by whom it had been adopted, for want of a better expression, in the case of America. I said, the distinction I made was a clear one—that England could, in her own ports, restrain as she pleased the commerce of Ireland; but that it was not in the power of Government, after what had been done (whether wisely or not), to enforce any English Act

which was to be executed in Ireland. He said, that this brought us back to the idea of a settlement; and that he should be curious, and indeed it was necessary to the subject, to know what questions about English Acts concerning trade, and what other commercial points would come into discussion in such a settlement. At the same time, he said, the subject was one of those which required conversing with people of information, and which, nevertheless, if any one was consulted upon it, would set the heads of every one afloat. However, he wished I would turn my thoughts to it, and let him see the principal points. I then pressed him again upon the head of your Bill; I thought it right to say that I was satisfied on every other head, but that this pressed strongly on my mind. All I wished was, that he would allow me to state to you the difficulties, such as he had mentioned them; but at the same time, to say, that they were overbalanced by an absolute necessity. He said, that he would not suppose that they could be overbalanced.

While I write this, I receive your despatches of the 12th instant. I have immediately enclosed your letter to Townshend, with one from myself, of which I send you a copy, and wait his answer with impatience. I was going on, when I was interrupted by your letters, to state to you, that my conversation with Lord Shelburne closed with his saying that the difficulties were capital, and that he could not believe that they could be overbalanced. I then observed, that a Cabinet was, I understood, to be held to-day. He said yes, and at eleven, and that it was then half-past ten, and therefore I must excuse him. As I had been there above an hour and a half, I could not with any propriety stay any longer.

According to Townshend's directions to me last night, I staid at home the whole morning, under the idea that I was to be sent for, as it was so directed in the King's approbation for the Cabinet being held, which Townshend showed me. Why this was

not done, whether the Cabinet has not been held, or whether Lord Shelburne thought he had received information enough for all, I cannot pretend to say. It is certainly unnecessary for me to observe, that the whole of this magnificent idea about a settlement was most probably intended to draw your attention off from the Bill you have proposed. I could do no otherwise than acquiesce in sending it over to you, as I had already stated my belief, confirmed so fully by your authority, that your proposal was necessary, and to the adoption of it, on this ground, I meant, if I could, to have pledged him by my last question; and although he did not accede to what I then asked, yet I think I should not have been justified in not agreeing to state to you his objections—which certainly have their weight, especially as he proposed an expedient in the room of yours, though insufficient and improper for the reasons which, as I told you above, I mentioned to him. I forgot to state in its proper place that I reminded him of the danger which was almost inevitable, that some enemy to Government would take the business up, if not immediately done by Ministry themselves.

Half-past Eleven, P.M.

I have just received the enclosed answer from Townshend; and though it contains nothing, yet I cannot but feel too much for your impatience to delay till Wednesday night the acknowledging your despatches, and the assuring you that there shall be no remissness whatever on my part to follow up this business as much as possible, and to press it forward in this strange scene of procrastination. Nothing can make me happier than your approbation of my conduct, and your kind disposition to trust so much to that most unfeigned affection with which I am,

My dearest brother,

Ever yours,

W. W. Grenville.

P.S.—I mean to-morrow to write to Lord Shelburne, stating that you have sent over a fresh despatch to Mr. Townshend, and referring him to that for the absolute necessity of adopting your proposal, which still leaves room for his settlement, if it is thought proper and expedient. The one will remove the present difficulty, the other prevent the rise of any fresh source of discord. But how far the latter can or ought at this time to be taken up, is with me very doubtful. If I get on Wednesday such an answer as I wish, you shall see me very soon.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Dec. 20th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I am still unable to send you any final answer, although I must confess that I think we approach much nearer to it than we have done yet.

The Cabinet met yesterday. As I was not quite satisfied with what I had said the day before on the subject of recognition, and of the preamble, I thought it better to put a few words to paper, and to send them to Townshend. I enclose a copy of that paper and the letter which went with it. They were delivered to Townshend during the Cabinet. I heard nothing at all from him last night.

This morning I was surprised and shocked—and I cannot say which I was most—by seeing in the papers the conversation which had passed in the House on the subject of Ireland, of which Fitzpatrick, though it was evidently a concerted thing, had not thought proper to give me any notice whatever. I immediately resolved to say something about it in the House to-day. Accordingly I sent a note to Townshend, desiring to be allowed to wait upon him in the morning. I told him my intention, and questioned him upon the subject of the Cabinet. He showed me, what (he said) was not properly a minute, but a

memorandum taken there. I could not copy that, but as soon as I came home I endeavoured to recollect it, and believe the enclosed is very near the words. This I said immediately was only losing time, and that it was very useless for him to trouble himself with writing such a despatch, as I would take upon myself to make your answer to the two points it contained: First, that the bill you had sent over was drawn expressly to avoid the question of what *had been* the right, as it declared only what *is* now the right; and that if there was to be any reservation as to its being now the right, I would only say that this would be the most disgraced country in Europe. As to the other point, I knew perfectly that every step you had taken was with a full knowledge of the circumstances of the case, because I had sent them over to you myself a few days after my arrival in London. That being the case, Townshend said he would not write, but state these things to the Cabinet, which was to meet again either to-morrow or the next day; I do not positively remember which. I then stated to him what I meant to say to-day, in which he acquiesced. He told me General Conway wished to see me, as he thought that he had struck out an idea which might answer effectually; and he showed me a few words which were to explain this idea. They were in the form of a resolution, and went only to say, that Great Britain had, by the repeal, renounced all thoughts of exercising any right to make laws to bind Ireland. You may easily guess the answer which I made to this.

From Townshend I went to Conway. Him I found very strongly impressed with Lord B.'s ideas about renunciation, complete satisfaction, and the effect of a declaratory law, and of the repeal of it, which, he said, left things as they were before. I combated all this very strongly, and at last got him to acquiesce in the idea of a recognition, provided that the words were such as not to imply that England *never had* the right. I said that I conceived, as this was merely a point of honour, and not

a reservation of anything to be exercised in future, that all that Government could desire was to use such words as should not *necessarily* imply that the right never existed; that this was expressly the description of the words in your bill, which were so drawn as to go only to present right, and yet so as to be very satisfactory to Ireland. In all this he acquiesced, and then wished that some notice might be given in the "Dublin Gazette;" that the cause had only been heard because it was pending before; and that after the holidays, something satisfactory would be done. I answered as to the first, that after the opinion delivered privately by the Chancellor, and in the House of Commons, as I had understood, by the Attorney-General, that even a new cause could not be rejected by the Judges, such a ground would be a very bad one to take. To this he agreed. As to the other point, I said that it was my intention to state it in the House of Commons, which I apprehended would answer nearly the same purpose. He assented to this also, and so I left him. I then went to the House of Commons; there I saw Townshend, and asked him what day the Parliament was to meet after Christmas, because I thought it would give more solemnity if I gave notice for a particular day, and moved for a call on that day; and that the earlier it was, the better it would be. He said they met on the 21st. I proposed that day, and he agreed. Hartley rose at the same time with me, and being called to, moved for a call on the 22nd. I then got up and said, that if I had not been prevented, I was going to have moved it for the 21st; but I would now trouble the House only to give notice that on that day a very important business would be brought before them on the subject of Ireland; that I had understood that a conversation had taken place the day before on that subject; that I lamented exceedingly that I had been so unfortunate as to be absent at that time, because if I had been there I should have thought it my duty to have stated to the House, in justice to the Lord-

Lieutenant of Ireland, that the business in question had been submitted by you to the consideration of Government, and had been in the contemplation of the King's servants a considerable time before any notice had been given of a motion to be made upon it by a noble Lord in the House; that I wished further, in justice to you, to say, that "there was no man in either kingdom more decidedly of opinion that the good faith of Great Britain was solemnly pledged to Ireland, by the repeal of the 6th Geo. I., in the last sessions, upon the avowed and explained principle of putting an end to every idea of legislation and jurisdiction over that kingdom; and that there was no man more eagerly desirous than you, that that faith so pledged, and upon that principle so explained, should be religiously adhered to and maintained, as the national honour and national interest required it should be maintained, sacred and inviolable."

This brought up Lord Beauchamp, who began by assuring and protesting that the part he had taken was upon the best motives, &c., &c. He then went into the question of the writ of error, how far it could have been rejected, and how useless it was in Ireland, &c., &c. He then said that it was a point of parliamentary fairness, that when one person had given notice of a motion, it should be left to him, and not taken up in the meantime by any other person.

I answered, that as to the noble Lord's motives, he must do me the justice to say that *I* had been perfectly silent on that head. That with respect to the question about the writ of error, neither did I conceive this to be a proper time for that discussion. But that with regard to parliamentary fairness, I did not imagine that His Majesty's Government would think themselves justified in postponing so important a question, and which would have been brought on before the recess if there had been time, merely because the noble Lord meant to move something about it at a distant day.

This ended the conversation on the subject; except that I

added that the noble Lord had misunderstood me when he imagined that *I* was to move the business on the 21st, as I *apprehended* that it was the intention of Government to do it.

I cannot help thinking that by this, which has been done entirely without the concurrence or even knowledge of Lord Shelburne, we have gained a great point. By giving such a notice, speaking from the Treasury bench in the hearing of, and backed by Townshend and Pitt, I have most undoubtedly pledged Government to do something on that day. If that is short of your wishes, see in what a situation they stand; if not, you are landed. In the meantime the notice and the explicit declaration made in your name must surely be infinitely useful to you in Ireland.

I wait with great impatience the final decision of the Cabinet. Conway's expression was, that he conceived there was no objection to any preamble which had not a retrospect. If we can convince them that ours has none, or frame one not quite so strong, but very near it, think what ground we stand upon, in having obtained something stronger and more advantageous to the interests of Ireland than any renunciation whatever. "For this we must thank" Mansfield, who has certainly extricated us from a scene of considerable difficulty.

If it could be done without great inconvenience to you in Ireland, I should be very desirous either of coming back here, in case I get away soon enough, or if not, of staying here till the 21st; because I am convinced my presence here is of infinite moment, to prevent their being frightened at the time into any weakening of the preamble, and to goad them on to do something. For you see, even in this case, the objection was not so much to the taking any particular step, as to the doing anything at all; and when forced to that, and driven from their intrenchments of indolence and delay, you see how much they are inclined to take the measures you wish. But this shall be

decided by your wishes on the subject, unless I should set out before I receive them.

I say nothing of the dissolution; I have not, however, lost sight of that, and will press it to-morrow; but I thought the other the more important point, having so fine an opening, which I trust you will think I have not neglected.

D'Ivernois is come. He was with me this morning, and comes again to-morrow. He says the business goes on at Geneva far better than he could have expected, owing to the Constitution which the mediating powers have given them, which appears truly, what he states it, worse than that of Venice.

Believe me, my dear brother,
Ever most affectionately yours,
W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Dec. 23rd, 1782.

My dear Brother,

When I wrote last to you, I expressed considerable hopes that this tedious business was drawing near to a conclusion, and that Government here would at last consent to grant the happiness and peace of Great Britain and Ireland, to solicitations that I should have been ashamed to have employed for any private object, however near to me. These hopes are, I must confess, weakened by my conversation of this morning with Townshend. I can plainly see that he is himself personally disposed to comply with your wishes. I can as plainly see that a greater and more powerful minister sets himself against them.

Dec. 24th, 1782.

So far I had written yesterday, when I resolved to delay writing further to you till to-day, on account of the promise

which Townshend gave me that he would see Lord Shelburne last night, and press him upon the subject.

I have been with Townshend again this morning, and yet have nothing like a decided answer to give you. He told me that Thurlow made the most difficulty, but that Dunning seems to be entirely with us. Yesterday he said that Shelburne talked much of the advantages of holding high language. What the tenor of Conway's language was, I have stated to you before. Of the rest I know nothing. I own I am rather in doubt whether Lord Shelburne acts upon a system of resuming, or only of gaining time; neither of them is very pleasant or flattering to you.

Townshend appears to me to be most heartily and sincerely with you; nothing can be more explicit than his language was to that point. He complained of irresponsible Cabinet Ministers, and seemed to throw it upon that. I then stated your impatience, what you must feel, and asked how you could go on? I took out of my pocket your three letters to me, of the 12th and 14th instant, and read him such extracts as I thought would *express* your opinion and your impatience, and would pretty strongly *imply* though not *express* your determination upon the subject of resigning. He took the hint, and said that he could not wonder at any resolution you might take, and that he had told the Cabinet so. To this I answered, that it was right for me not to conceal from *him* (though I did not mean it as a *formal* declaration), that you certainly would not stay a moment there, if you found the proposal of a Bill of recognition either negatived or put off longer. He repeated that he could not wonder at it. He then charged me with a commission to write to you this evening, and to say that although nothing was yet done, he would labour to the utmost of his power that your wishes should be complied with, and that he hoped to bring the business to a conclusion *in a very few days*; that in the meantime he thought that his writing an official despatch,

which should not be explicit, would be by no means pleasant to you. In this I agreed most fully.

The difficulty, he told me, lay in bringing them to think of anything but the peace, by which you see that business is still *en train*.

This consideration makes me less eager than I should otherwise be to cut the matter short. I continue to think, that if they are sufficiently pressed, you will carry your point; because I am fully persuaded they will not push you to the wall. In the meantime they feel the situation into which the notice for the House of Commons has thrown them; for Townshend expressed his satisfaction at it to-day, and said it lay a necessity on Government to do something.

While I am writing this, I receive your letters of the 21st. The despatch will, I think, have a good effect in pressing the thing forward, and assisting the exertions which I sincerely believe Townshend will make. At the same time, as it must now be the 27th at soonest before you can receive this letter, which leaves everything exactly where my last despatches to you did, I should think upon the receipt of it you would do well to write a letter to Townshend, rather demanding than requesting an immediate answer.

What I mean is (if you should approve of the idea), that you should say, "that after having so repeatedly stated the grounds of your proposal, to which you can now add nothing," (because any reasoning of yours brings on more discussion) "except that every day gives fresh force to them, you have nothing left but to request, as your situation entitles you to do, that you may at last have an immediate and explicit answer, in order that on the one hand you may not disgrace your personal honour and the faith of Great Britain by continuing to pledge them to assurances which are not to be performed, nor on the other hand appear by remaining in your situation without a favourable answer, to countenance a system which your own

mind informs you to be at once unjust and impracticable." If you think the expressions too strong, or not sufficiently so, you will weaken or aggravate them; but I am very impatient to receive some such letter, which shall *not* enter into reasons or discussion on a subject so completely exhausted, but shall manifest your own intention, which I am convinced will operate more strongly than all the argument in the world.

You will perhaps say that I have already in my possession such a paper. But I must own I feel great difficulty in fixing the exact moment when to make use of it, and when to say that I can no longer in justice to you give credit to assurances of an immediate determination so often repeated and so often found fallacious. With you, who have received none such, there is no such difficulty. Besides, the letter in my hands can only operate as an actual resignation on your behalf, and authorized by you; whereas the letter from you, which I propose, would operate as a threat, and by that means prevent, I believe, the event itself; or if not, it would at least convince your feelings, as well as mine, most unequivocally of the absolute necessity for taking such a measure, as the only one by which you could preserve either integrity of character or uprightness of conduct. Such a letter might, if the winds do not prevent it, be here in a week from this day; and before that time I am most thoroughly convinced I shall receive not a single word further than I have already. With such a letter to deliver to Townshend, I should think myself authorized to *demand* a Cabinet; or if I could not obtain that, to make use of your former letter, and desire from you that I might see the King, to state to him your sense of the impracticability of such a system, and of the certainty that Government will be compelled in October to make concessions without gaining any advantage by them, infinitely greater than what would in January conciliate the affections of all Ireland.

One way or other, this business does most certainly draw to

a conclusion. I allow, by this proposal, one week more for them to take their resolution. If they delay it beyond that, it is in effect the most mortifying and the most insulting way of refusing it that they could have adopted; and as such I think you would do right to state it in your letter. But whichever way it terminates, I think we shall derive the greatest advantage from Townshend's having authorized me to promise that on the 21st something should be done in the English House of Commons, and having sat by and acquiesced in my saying that *that* something would, I *apprehended*, be brought forward by Government. If it is not, I think I need not say what a situation they stand in; and what ours will be —how much better than if nothing had been said. On the other hand, if they do authorize me to bring forward, or bring forward themselves, on that day, a satisfactory Bill, we shall derive much more advantage to Government from having given an early notice of it, and much more personal credit from its coming through my mouth from you, than if it had been done only by the Minister, and kept back till the 21st.

I have had no communication with Lord Shelburne, nor have I either seen or heard from him since I spoke in the House of Commons. I mean, however, to-morrow to write to him on the strength of having received fresh despatches from you, and to press him in the strongest manner, that *the Bill to be* proposed on the 21st, may be such as will satisfy your wishes by satisfying the people of Ireland. What the new reason for delay will be, God knows. In the meantime is it not inconceivable that a man will hazard so much, in every sense of the word, so much credit as a Minister, so much in point of character, and so much in point of weight and support to his administration, without its being possible for one to discover any one object under Heaven which he is to gain by the delay? Possibly such a letter as I wish from you may succeed in bringing him to his senses; if not, I am sure the sooner your

hands are washed of it the better; for if the rest of your administration in Ireland is to go on in the same manner, and you are to be left for months together without knowing whether Government here will expressly support or expressly contradict you, and all this only that they may gain time, without having anything further to gain, such a situation is neither suited for such tempers as we have, nor for such characters as I hope we shall ever preserve together.

The real grievance seems to be, what did hang as a dead weight upon the last administration till it pulled it down, and what must hang as the same dead weight upon this—I mean a Cabinet of eleven. If these are disunited, there are not wanting, even among themselves, men to publish it to the world; and how is it possible that they should be otherwise, except by the means of that delightful expedient which I stated to you once before, and which was again alluded to in yesterday's conversation. I should hope, however, that the appearance of your resolution will put an end to this scene of procrastination, disgraceful to you and dangerous to the country; if it does not, I am sure the resolution itself is most absolutely necessary to vindicate us to ourselves, as well as to others, from the consequences which we both foresee.

In the meantime, my dear brother, I cannot close this letter without expressing to you the extreme pleasure and satisfaction which I feel when, after having confided so much to my discretion, you express yourself satisfied that, however unsuccessful I may have been, the failure of my endeavours to procure this long-expected answer has not been owing to any want of zeal or judgment in me, but to those to whom the consequences are really to be imputed, and who have on that account already made themselves most deeply responsible both to God and their country.

Believe me, my dear brother,

Ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

D'Ivernois is here, and going over almost immediately to Ireland with two other *commissaires*.

If any decision should drop from the skies before I receive your letter to Townshend, I will suppress it entirely.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Dec. 25th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

All the effect which I hoped for by the official despatch has been produced by the confidential communication. Townshend has had this morning a long conversation with Lord Shelburne, the result of which is a compliance with your wishes. But this will be done by an official despatch, and not by a Cabinet minute, as they cannot venture to meet a Cabinet upon it. Still, however, I think that is sufficient for you—sufficient to authorize you in present, and to justify you in future. I write this in great haste, in order if possible to prevent the measure which I recommended in my last.

Thurlow will probably oppose it in that House. They talk of altering the bill, *but not materially*. I put the question explicitly, whether it was to contain a recognition, and was answered that it should. Townshend asked me whether you would be likely to pledge yourself that this should satisfy, as he thought that might possibly be expected. I said it could not be expected that you should *pledge* yourself for madmen, but that you certainly *hoped*. He then said that it would take a day or two to prepare and send in circulation the despatch, and hoped this would make no material difference. I said certainly not, if I was allowed to state this conversation to you. To this he agreed. Then I mentioned the dissolution. He said that you seemed to agree that this would take effect much better with the news of a peace, and that (he might tell me confidentially) this must be decided within three days, unless something very unforeseen happens.

On this idea I wait here a few days longer, and then shall bring your despatches with me, and go back if you think it right.

I think the event shows how much more strongly your determination operated, as I said it would, than all the reasoning possible.

Believe me ever,

My dear brother,

Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

The "Order" referred to in the following letter is the Order of the Knights of St. Patrick, instituted in Ireland, under the Viceroyalty of Lord Temple, on the 5th of February, 1783.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Dec. 28th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

As, in consequence of your letter of the 25th, I mean to stay over the 21st of January, I write immediately to explain to you what I referred to in my last about the Order. It is not of any very great importance; but as I then expected to have seen you in a few days, I thought I should be able to explain it better by word of mouth.

It relates to the difficulty of reconciling the business of the Commoners who have been talked of for it, with the King's strong approbation of your only having proposed sixteen, and his very great disinclination, which Townshend has repeatedly expressed to me, to increase the number even to eighteen or twenty. I suppose you mean sixteen *exclusive* of the Sovereign and Grand Master. I apprehend Conolly, Ponsonby, O'Neill, and Daly to have been talked of. The difficulty is greater, because I understand that the two first have more than once refused

peerages. This, however, you will arrange as you think best. The King was pleased with the motto, *Quis separabit?* To this would apply very well the Collar which Hawkins told me had been thought of, of trefoils and roses alternate. Townshend will write, or has wrote, to you for a plan, which plan is meant to include Badges, and all other playthings belonging to it. You'll break Percy's heart if you settle it all without him. Pray oblige me, as a herald, so far as to appoint a genealogist, and to make the Knights deliver in pedigrees three descents back at least: that is the number in the Garter Statutes, which I send to you. The Thistle and Bath have both genealogists—the last must be an arduous office. I do not apprehend that the names are meant to be sent as part of the plan, nor indeed can you do that yet. Do you offer one to the *Nolo Privy Councillari*, or do you draw the line of none but Privy Councillors?

I called the other day on the Archbishop of Cashel, and was told that he was gone for Ireland; but I'll know in a day or two. Adieu.

Ever yours,
W. W. G.

The King seems to expect to get two Red Ribands by it—Lord A. and Lord B. Query the latter.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Dec. 30th, 1782.

My dear Brother,

I have been with Townshend this morning, and have had a long conversation with him. He showed me his despatch to you, and that brought on the conversation, which I managed so that I might at any time have produced your last letter; but upon the whole I thought it better not shown, although the

words of his despatch are certainly by no means satisfactory. He spoke very openly to me, and said that as his despatch had been written without the concurrence of Cabinet, he thought he could hazard no more. In this I could not but agree with him, especially as it gave me occasion to press upon him, for his sake as well as yours, the necessity of something being finally settled.

He then went at large into the difficulties. He was convinced, he said, that it would come in the end to your proposition. But in the meantime Thurlow was against it, and meant to oppose the Bill; and Shelburne wanted to be forced to it, and said that he was sure a stand would be to be made somewhere; and why not now? I answered that it did not seem to me the most prudent step to choose a post where no man of any description would stand by you. We had much more conversation of the same sort. There were those, Townshend said, who had said that as the preliminaries were expected soon, it would come with better grace then. But, continued he, if we wait till then, I am afraid it may not come at all. To this I answered, that this was exactly my idea, but in the meantime, was it not fit you should know on what ground you stood? He said so; and (he went on) see where we should be in that case. The Lord-Lieutenant would not stay an hour. Here he stopped, as waiting my answer. I immediately said, most certainly not. And then the person who succeeds him will be to wait on you. You know better than I do the situation of things and men. Tell me to whom I am to apply. To the Duke of Portland's people?—to the old Court and Lord Shannon?—to Hood and his set? I went on a good deal more in the same strain, and ended with saying that he could not be astonished, or even at all surprised, that every day should increase your impatience. This was to prepare him for your peremptory despatch, which, if my subsequent letters have not stopped, I shall now most certainly deliver. He told me that

on Wednesday he should see most of his colleagues, and he should then hope to have some answer to give me.

I threw out one idea to him, which I said proceeded entirely from myself: and therefore, if he mentioned it at all, it should be as a thing to be proposed to you, and not as one coming from you. It was that, as it would probably be thought right that the matter should be discussed in a Committee of the whole House as a foundation for bringing in the Bill, such terms might be used in the resolutions of that Committee as should obviate the difficulty which was made upon the idea of the preamble's referring to past rights. I then mentioned in general words my idea for those resolutions, but did not give them to him in writing. I have since reduced them to writing, and enclose them to you for your ideas upon them. I mean to-morrow to read them to Townshend, in order to explain my idea fully, but not to leave them with him. The first resolution is copied almost verbatim from the addresses. If you turn to them, you will see what I have omitted, and that I have inserted nothing but what I thought absolutely necessary, in order not to clog the resolution, and render it thereby less perspicuous.

Pray let me have your ideas on this as soon as possible. I still think your preamble will at last be consented to: but a pressing despatch, to be used or not, as occasion requires, can do no harm.

Believe me,

My dearest brother,

Most affectionately and sincerely yours,

W. W. G.

1783.

THE RENUNCIATION BILL—THE FALL OF THE SHELBURNE ADMINISTRATION —THE CABINET INTERREGNUM—THE COALITION MINISTRY—RESIGNATION OF LORD TEMPLE.

THE impediments and delays Mr. Grenville had to encounter in his negotiations with Ministers, are sufficiently detailed in the preceding correspondence. They appear to have originated chiefly with Lord Shelburne, who, in the line of conduct he pursued on this occasion, betrayed either a singular indifference to the state of Ireland, or an inexcusable ignorance of it. For the latter, indeed, he had no reasonable excuse, since the suspense of the public mind, and the growing discontents of the people, were constantly pressed upon his attention by Lord Temple and Mr. Grenville. There certainly was no shadow of pretence for not thoroughly understanding the whole merits of the question at issue between the two kingdoms, and still less for not setting it at rest at once, as the Ministry did at last, and must have intended to do in some shape all throughout. Yet it was not until the beginning of January, 1783, after nearly

six weeks of incessant representations and harassing interviews with Lord Shelburne, Pitt and Townshend, that the mission of the Irish Secretary assumed a definite shape, and that something like a distinct hope was held out of its being brought, at last, to a satisfactory conclusion.

Lord Shelburne appears to have been desirous of postponing the Irish difficulty until after he should have succeeded in securing the peace, for which he was then treating with France. He thought that a measure, however just and indispensable in itself, emanating from a strong Government, would be received as a graceful concession, while the same measure, granted by a Government which had been described early in the preceding December by Lord Mornington (afterwards Marquis of Wellesley) as subsisting solely on the divisions of its enemies, might seem to be wrung from the embarrassments of the Administration. This shuffling policy, and want of magnanimity in the Minister—this coquetting with extremities, in the forlorn hope of extracting from them some advantage for a sinking Government, pervaded the councils of the Cabinet, and led finally to its downfall.

In the meanwhile, agitation was rising into open manifestations of distrust and resentment in Ireland. The Volunteers, whose nationality had been appeased by the recent Repeal of the Declaratory Law, renewed their demands for a specific measure, by which the legislative and judicial independence of the country, guaranteed by that Repeal, should be unconditionally recognized, and placed beyond doubt or cavil. Their suspicions were excited by the hesitation of the Imperial Government,

and their indignation was roused by the fact that, in contravention of the settlement by Act of Parliament of the rights of Ireland, an Irish case had been heard in an English court of law, and decided by Lord Mansfield. The circumstances were irritating, and peculiarly calculated to shake the confidence of so sensitive a race in the sincerity of their rulers. Nor were there wanting persons who were ready to avail themselves, for factious purposes, of every fresh symptom of national disquietude to inflame the passions of the people. At the head of these disturbing patriots were Lord Beauchamp and Mr. Flood; fortunately, on the other side, was Mr. Grattan, whose pure patriotism, confiding in the honour and justice of the Imperial Legislature, resisted all violent demands, until a fair opportunity had been afforded to England to vindicate the integrity of a settlement, the principle of which was clear, and admitted on all hands. His language on this point, in reply to an Address from the Volunteers, was explicit: "I know of no circumstance, except one, which has really happened to alarm you: the entertaining and deciding by the Court of King's Bench, in England, an Irish cause, is, no doubt, a very great infringement. You do not imagine that I mean to rest under it; but I shall never suppose such a measure to be the act of England, unless her Parliament shall hesitate to do it away in a manner the most clear, comprehensive and satisfactory." Mr. Grattan's firmness stayed the impetuous course of the Volunteers; but it was at the cost of his immediate popularity, and, as it afterwards proved, at the imminent risk of his personal safety.

It was while these events were taking place in Ireland, that Lord Temple and Mr. Grenville were urging upon the Administration the imperative necessity of bringing forward a measure that should satisfy the apprehensions of the Irish people. With that view a Bill, known by the title of the Bill of Renunciation, was prepared by Lord Temple and forwarded to Mr. Grenville. Upon the structure, and not upon the substance, of this Bill, innumerable quibbles were raised. The difficulty with Lord Shelburne was, not the renunciation itself, for that was nothing more than a confirmation of the repeal, but the technical form in which it was to be expressed. Nobody dreamt of disturbing or evading the principle of the measure which this Bill simply declared anew and fortified by a more distinct enunciation; but Ministers could not agree upon the words—for into a discussion about words the whole negotiation finally degenerated. And thus, the fear of compromising the dignity of England by some unguarded expression, or of failing from over caution to satisfy the demands of Ireland, had the effect of protracting the passage of a measure, upon the substantive justice and urgent necessity of which all parties were unanimous.

At length Mr. Grenville was enabled to announce to his brother that these petty discussions were brought to a satisfactory close. But the issue, as will be subsequently seen, was not quite so near as he supposed. The Administration had wasted so much time in verbal criticisms, that, although they had the merit of ultimately introducing the Bill into Parliament, they were obliged to bequeath the satisfaction of carrying it to their successors.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 2nd, 1783.

My dear Brother,

After the many changes and delays which have occurred in the course of this business, I think I may at last congratulate you, and what is infinitely more, the two kingdoms, on its being brought to such an issue as you desire.

I told you in my last despatch that Townshend seemed to me much alarmed lest he should have gone too far in his letter to you, and that at the same time I had assured him that you would not think he went far enough, as the whole question turned upon the point of recognition, which was very distantly alluded to in his letter. When I saw him yesterday, his alarms appeared to be increased. This morning, however, he told me that he had been with Conway, who understood his authority to be quite sufficient for what he had done, and with Lord Shelburne, who said that it was a damned thing, and that he wished Lord Temple would have stood it, but that it could not be helped, and that he (Townshend) must therefore think over with the Crown lawyers such a preamble as should recognize in future, without any retrospect whatever. To this point Townshend said he thought your Bill went; and therefore he told me he was to send it down in that shape in which you sent it (excepting the omission of the words *of right* in the two places where they occur) to Lord Camden for his opinion. I then mentioned what I had hinted to him before in the way of resolutions, which might, I thought, be so drawn as to preclude the idea of retrospect. He wished to see the form I had adopted; upon which I gave him, as coming from myself only, the enclosed paper, which you will see differs a little from that which I sent you before. Both these he sent to Lord Camden, with a letter, desiring that he and myself might see him

to-morrow morning for his ideas on the subject. You will observe that *he* is from principle warm for Irish claims; and therefore I think it not a bad quarter to begin with.

I flatter myself you will approve of my reason for withholding your despatch No. 16, as the word *courts*, without *of law*, which we have scratched out, certainly includes the Peers; and nothing would have been so agreeable to Lords T. and S. as a point of form which they need not have mentioned till towards the conclusion of the business, and so might completely have gained their darling object—time.

Still, however, I thought much of that letter—too important to be lost—and therefore threw it together into the enclosed paper, which I sent to Townshend the night before last, together with a copy of such parts of his despatches as authorized you to pledge the faith of Government, *he having asked me for them, not for himself.*

While I was still in a state of suspense, your letter and despatch of the 29th reached me. I thought it best to keep the latter till this morning, when, I need hardly say, I did not deliver it, though I thought proper to read it to Townshend, in order, as I told him, that he might be perfectly acquainted with your feelings on the occasion, and might see I had not exaggerated them. You will remember that your next despatch is numbered 16. If it comes before you receive this, I will alter it. To-morrow you shall know the result of Lord Camden's conversation, upon which much I think depends; though after what has now passed, I have no idea of the possibility of their drawing back again, even if they were so inclined.

Brooke's business, Jemmy tells me, passed the Treasury yesterday.

You will have had an answer, such as it is, about the Duke of L. and Hussey Burgh.

With regard to Perry, I have written to you already fully on the subject.

I have talked once or twice about Portugal; but they want exceedingly to be quickened, *là-dessus*.

Townshend desires to make you an apology through me, and will do it himself when he writes, for the delay. From him no apology whatever is necessary. Adieu.

My dear brother,

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

When I pressed Lord Shelburne about Hussey Burgh, he said he thought there would be no objection to promising him that he should be made as soon as any one. I stated this to Townshend this morning, who is to speak to the King about it again to-morrow.

About this time another subject was engaging the earnest attention of Lord Temple—the foundation (already alluded to) of an Order of Knighthood in Ireland. Several letters relating to the details of the institution, and the claims of different noblemen to be admitted into it, passed between Mr. Grenville and his brother. The following is selected as a specimen:—

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 7th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Although I think there is every reason to hope that I shall be able to send you by a messenger, either to-night or to-morrow morning at furthest, the result of the Cabinet, which, after having been postponed ever since Sunday, is at last to be held this evening; yet, as I know by experience, that it may be again deferred, I would not omit writing to you by post express

upon a subject which you will perhaps think trifling in itself. I went this morning to Townshend, with your despatches of the 2nd instant, upon which we had very little conversation, except his assurances of bringing the business to an end this evening. After that I turned the conversation to your Order, and read him the names. To my utter astonishment, he started a doubt whether my Lord Courtown *would take it*. To which I answered, that the first names in the list having signified their consent, undoubtedly it was not a thing to be offered where there was the least chance of a refusal. He then said that he would take upon him to sound Lord Courtown; and that, as he was his brother-in-law, he would throw out to him that a thing of the sort was in agitation; and that if Lord Courtown should like it, he believed that *he, Townshend*, would have interest enough to *procure it for him*. It was impossible for me to tell Townshend, or even to give him to understand what nevertheless certainly ought to have occurred to him, that it would but ill answer your purpose, whatever it was, in recommending Lord Courtown, that the merit of it should be ascribed to him.

I had nothing, therefore, left but to drop the conversation, and to write to you, as I now do, immediately on my return home, to suggest to you whether it would not be worth your while, without affecting to know anything of this, to write to Lord Courtown to offer it, and perhaps to Townshend, to make a great merit with him of the recommendation of his brother-in-law, as the the only non-resident Knight. The sooner you send in the list and plan, &c., &c., undoubtedly the better.

Your names appear to me all unexceptionable, except possibly Lord Bechoe, who you know will give some trouble to the heralds to make out whether his father, who was a grazier, ever had a father of his own. But he is a man of great fortune, and a steady friend of Government, and I should think might pass. Lord Nugent's refusal leaves a vacancy. I own I should

be inclined to Lord Mountgarret as the senior Viscount, which would show that it was not to be exclusively confined to Earls, at the same time that no other person could pretend the same claims with so old a peer, the senior Viscount, and the first man in rank of so great a family. Besides, this might detach Butler, of the county Kilkenny, from Flood; and it is surely a great object to cut him off from all hopes of the county, as that would give him an appearance of popularity, &c., &c. Unless you do something of this sort, shall you not apprehend affronting the lower orders of the peerage? If Lord Kinsale was not what he is, I should wish for him on the same account, but that is impossible. Pray consider the other well, for it strikes me as important.

I return you the Derry Papers. Townshend is to search his office for their intercepted correspondence here, which I will send you.

Bulkeley wrote me the enclosed, to which I returned an ostensible answer, referring to you, but at the same time distinguishing between a pension, and provision out of the revenue for a revenue officer's widow.

Townshend sends you McLaughlin's petition and case. What does Lord Beauchamp mean by his letter to the "Vol." about the King's speech?

Pray desire Lady Temple not to forget Lord Nugent's velvet, or he will be outrageous.

Believe me, ever yours,

W. W. G.

One good result had been attained by the perseverance with which Mr. Grenville pursued his object with Ministers in reference to the Renunciation Bill, and the consistency he observed in maintaining the policy which he and Lord Temple knew to be essential to the security of the

British power in Ireland. If that policy was not carried out, Lord Temple was relieved from all responsibility, and was prepared to relinquish into other hands the confusion and disorder which he could not obtain the means of ameliorating. As Mr. Grenville observes in the following letter, he was "completely master of his own ground;" he had clearly stated, and constantly urged his views of the only course that could be followed with safety or credit; and if he failed in carrying them into effect, the *onus* would rest with the Administration. Happily he did not fail. The Bill was shaped and passed; but the obstacles which impeded it, and which are detailed in subsequent letters, rendered its ultimate success doubtful up to the last moment.

Looking back, at this distance of time, upon the curious struggle which took place in the Cabinet on this question, we cannot fail to be struck by the immense disproportion between cause and effect exhibited in this strange episode in the history of the Shelburne Administration. The full recognition of the rights of Ireland had received the concurrent sanction of the Legislatures of both kingdoms only a short time before. No doubt whatever existed as to the intention of the repeal of the Declaratory Law. The Volunteers, to whose energetic demonstrations that healing measure was mainly attributable, were thoroughly satisfied, and, instead of displaying their nationality in angry and defiant resolutions, they adopted the language of congratulation and enthusiastic allegiance to the Government. This felicitous state of things was suddenly interrupted by one of those incidents which no foresight could

have anticipated, and which, absolutely trivial in itself, was magnified at once, by the jealous spirit of patriotism, into a violation of the solemn compact that had just been ratified on both sides of the Channel. An Irish cause was brought into an English court of justice, was heard in the ordinary way, like any other cause, without reference to the competency of the tribunal before which it was tried, and decided, as a matter of course, by Lord Mansfield. The remedy for this contravention of the notorious settlement of the judicial independence of Ireland was plain. The decision was waste paper: it could not be carried into effect. The Irish might have rested satisfied with the power which they possessed of nullifying and rejecting the authority of the English Judge. But the delays of the Cabinet awakened their suspicions, and they apprehended, not, perhaps, very unnaturally, that if they suffered this single case of illegal interference to pass without some decisive declaration on the part of the English Legislature, it would be wrested into a precedent for further and still more dangerous innovations. Mr. Grattan held this opinion also, but trusted implicitly to the honour of the English Parliament for a measure that should fully set at rest all uneasiness on the subject; while Lord Temple was so impressed with the propriety of adopting such a measure that he drew up the Bill of Renunciation, which, after much superfluous discussion, ultimately passed into a law.

The case itself, however, lay in the narrowest compass, and admitted of the simplest solution. The Irish cause which had occasioned all this trouble, and menaced so

seriously the tranquillity of the country, had been entered for hearing *before* the operation of the Repeal, but delayed by some accident until a subsequent term. The reason why it was not dismissed when it came before the court was, that the time had elapsed for pleading against the competency of the court, pleadings having already begun upon the matter of the suit. The parties could not plead to the writ—to use the legal phraseology—because they had already pleaded in chief. The only time when, according to the practice of the court, the competency of the court could be objected to was when the cause was entered; but at that time the objection did not exist, and when the cause came on for hearing it was too late. Lord Mansfield took the cause without any reference to the special circumstances attending it, which he was not judicially called upon to notice. He acted strictly on the practice of the court; and, although it was held by some of the statesmen of the day that he ought to have taken a more enlarged view of so peculiar a case, it was the opinion of Mr. Fox that he could not have acted otherwise than he did. At all events, the case could never have been drawn into a precedent. The real point for consideration, upon which Mr. Fox—who had himself framed the Act of Repeal—entertained some doubts, was whether the Repeal was sufficiently minute and comprehensive in its scope, to extinguish the right of appeal in Irish cases, by writs of error, to the King's Bench of Great Britain. But this point was not raised, on its special merits, by Lord Mansfield's decision, which involved nothing more than a technical question arising

out of the practice of the court. It was wise to allay the feverish anxiety of the people, by removing any obscurity that hung over the settlement of the separate judicature of Ireland; but, such being clearly the intention of the Imperial Legislature, it is difficult to understand why it should have entailed so much clamour and misunderstanding.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 8th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

This morning I received your letter and despatch of the 3rd and 4th instant, and soon after, the enclosed note from Townshend. The general idea is, that they have received the exceedingly bad news of their negotiation being totally at an end; and the style of this letter seems, I must own, to confirm it. Before I close this letter, which shall not be till to-night, I shall most probably know with certainty. If it should be so, I see nothing in Lord Shelburne's conduct throughout this business, which can prevent me from being convinced that he has foreseen this conclusion, that the *acquiescence* is to be ascribed to that foresight, and to an intention of pledging you to some very strong measure to be immediately proposed to Ireland—of men, money, or some other support; and that his language about peace was calculated for no other purpose than that of making to himself a merit which he had not, and inducing me to pledge you with less difficulty to something of this sort, in the *improbable event* of a continuation of the war. If that should have been his aim, I have at least the consolation to reflect that I made none but a *very* general answer to that part of his conversation to which I allude, and which I stated to you at length in a former letter.

At the same time, I must freely own that I have been duped upon the subject of peace; not so much by their assurances, strong as those have been, and often as they have been repeated, as by the opinion which I then held, and which I have not much altered now, that a peace was absolutely necessary to their system of government. However, be all this as it may, I think you are in a situation to *voir venir*, and to rest upon your oars in full confidence that you are now completely master of your own ground, whether you are to be left to carry on the Government of Ireland upon those principles on which you have begun it, and on which alone we know it can be carried on with success, or whether the system is to be altered, and committed, of course, to other hands; in which there is no doubt but that the ill-success and confusion that must follow will justify your predictions to such a degree, and place your character in such a light, as would almost make it an event to be wished for by you, if it was not so fatal to the interests of both countries.

And this brings me to another point, in which I am very happy to feel myself justified and confirmed by your instructions in that line of conduct which I had fully resolved to adopt. I mean the holding out the most peremptory refusal to making either you or myself at all a party to postponing the business beyond the 21st, except in the single instance of their having some proposition to bring forward then, about their negotiations, of such a nature as to make the reason obvious to the mind of every man in Ireland, as well as in England. In such a case I will acquiesce, because I think I cannot in decency avoid it, under the delay of one day only. In every other case which can be supposed, I will claim a right to state to the House that the delay is neither consented to by you, nor arises from you; but is in your idea most pernicious. Surely, my own character and honour, as well as your's, demand this from me.

I am sick to death of this scene. Since I wrote the first part of my letter I have been to the levée, where I saw Townshend, and learnt from him that Lord Camden had taken upon himself to draw up a new preamble, which was *to soften on both sides*.—(What the meaning of this curious expression is, I will not pretend to say.) I then said, that at least I hoped it would contain an *explicit* recognition; because the measure would only be useful, in proportion as it *was* explicit. He agreed with me, as he had always done, and wished that I had seen Lord Camden. I asked if he was in town; he said he was to go back to-day to Chiselhurst, and had desired *him* to hold the council, *in his absence, on Friday*. I immediately went home, and wrote to Lord Camden, desiring to be allowed to wait upon him; but he was gone. I have just sent your despatch of the 4th, with the enclosed note to Townshend, which I hope will find him before dinner. How little does all this agree with Lord Shelburne's idea of doing what would be most satisfactory, and with all my fine reasoning at the beginning of my letter!

I will certainly write to you more when I come back from dinner; and, if I *can* make him, Townshend shall write too, because they cannot, upon paper, assign any good reason for the delay, and a bad one will give you advantages. Upon the whole, what a scene it is!

The news at Court was, that the negotiations are not broke off, only delayed; and this I take to be the real case, as no letter has been written to the Lord Mayor. If that be so, I shall of course hear no more of it to-day.

Elliott is to have a Red Ribband.

Jan. 10.

I have delayed finishing this letter till this morning, in the vain hope of being able to get something specific to propose to you. After dinner, on the 8th, Townshend produced Lord

Camden's preamble. I send you a copy of it, and need not, I am sure, observe to you how unsatisfactory it is to Ireland, and how humiliating to Great Britain; and how perfect an ignorance it shows, after all that has passed, of that business which is referred to him for a decision. Neither Lord Shelburne, Townshend, nor Pitt, who were present, attempted to defend it against the observations I made upon it.

Some conversation passed upon it, after which Townshend went away. The conversation then turned more particularly upon what was to be done, in which the only very settled idea that I could find was, that your preamble was not to be adopted.

Pitt then threw out the idea of declaring the intention of the Act of Repeal, and making the new enacting clause a consequence of the principles then adopted. We talked this over a little. I pressed for something being settled to send over to you. The answer Lord Shelburne gave me was, that the Cabinet lawyers were all dispersed, and without them nothing could be finally settled. Pitt then went away. I continued the conversation, and asked Lord Shelburne if it would not be right, as he had approved of Pitt's idea, that I should see Pitt, and endeavour to put something upon paper upon it. In this he agreed.

When I went home, I sent the enclosed note to Pitt, and in consequence of it saw him yesterday morning. I was near two hours with him, drawing up something of a form. At last, the Bill No. 1. was settled; more, I believe, because we were both tired out with weighing words, than for any great merit that I see in it. However, at the time I thought it might do; but in the course of the day, thinking it over, I disliked it, and sent the form No. 2. to Pitt, who desired to see me again. When I went to him, he proposed, after some conversation, the Bill No. 3., which I took to consider.

But, in the meantime, I am *au dernier point* at a loss what

to do in it; because, after an absence of six weeks, I know no more of the present ideas of people in Ireland, and of the squabbles and distinctions of words on which the whole turns, than the Ministers here do; and less, God knows, I cannot know! If you wait till something is formally sent you, I shall certainly be reduced to the necessity either of putting the business off, or of doing something in a hurry, without knowing whether it be right or wrong. For you may depend upon it, that neither will any of the unlearned Ministers pledge themselves to a specific form, nor will the learned come from their rural retreats one hour before the 17th.

In this situation I feel myself obliged to lay upon my oars, and to entreat you to return the messenger as soon as possible, to say whether any and which of the forms will do, or what kind of thing I am to press for; for I am thrown quite wide. Your old preamble they will not adopt except compelled to it. What their objection is I cannot find; but most likely it is the dear delight of alteration that operates upon them. If you think that nothing short of saying "They have now the right" will do, for God's sake say so explicitly in a despatch. I have never quite lost my patience in this cursed business till this moment, and I confess now I cannot quite preserve it. After having carried the great point against their will and inclination, we shall now be ruined by their delay and their damned country-houses.

If you don't like any of these forms I send you, and yet will not *propose* any other, for God's sake send one over to me that *I* may propose it, or bring their's as near as possible to it. Pray return your messenger as soon as you can, for this disappointment and anxiety works me more than I can express to you. Adieu.

Believe me, my dearest brother,

Most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

You will observe that these cursed delays have driven us so near the mark, that it will be impossible for me to hear from you again before the 21st. You will, therefore, send me your full determination on every point, and in every case that you can foresee. Nobody can feel more than I do the painful necessity of being obliged to act upon my own judgment upon the general contents of your letters, instead of acting up to any specific idea. What increases my difficulty is the whole matter having arisen since I left Ireland, and my consequent ignorance of the language of individuals on every other part of the subject, except the preamble you sent over, to which they were pledged. Would to God that they would adhere to that!

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

Pray return Lord Camden's preamble.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 19th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I received last night your letters of the 15th, and this morning went to Townshend with them. We proceeded together to the Premier's, who expressed great dissatisfaction at the contents of your despatch. We had a good deal of conversation about it, which ended in Townshend's proposing that *he* should on Tuesday move for leave to bring in the Bill, and that in the meantime your opinion might be taken on the preamble proposed by Lord Ashburton. I thought it worth while to fall in with this idea, provided, as I expressed myself, that the motion was made on Tuesday, and in such words as should be pledges to Ireland of satisfaction.

My reason for this, was my wish that you should have an opportunity of seeing the enclosed preamble, which Townshend is to send you formally to-night, and judging upon it. You

see it is directly adverse to the principle of recognition; still, as it is so very strong as to the future, and the doubts being capable of being referred to Lord Mansfield's decision, I cannot help hoping that it may do. On the other hand, it will certainly pass the two Houses better; because Lord Mansfield, the Chancellor, Lord Loughborough *and Lord Ashburton*, will, in the case of a recognition, protest against the repeal being at all conclusive or satisfactory. This would be strong for us to meet, and therefore I think you may fairly take the new ground; express your adherence to your old opinion, that the Bill does not contradict it, but that it was an object to carry it with as little opposition and to make it as generally satisfactory as possible.

I am to apologize to you in the strongest manner for not adhering to your positive instructions. But in such a case, and at this distance, one must act much on one's own judgment; and I cannot help thinking that if you had been on the spot, you would have done the same, considering how far they are pledged by Townshend's motion, and that there will be little *appearance* of delay.

Jemmy agrees in opinion with me. I write this in great hurry, and need not exhort you to return an answer as early as possible. I have not at all pledged you to approve of Lord Ashburton's preamble, which, *au contraire*, I have combatted here, but have said: "I am incapable of judging," &c., &c.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

You must not be angry with Townshend for sending Lord Ashburton's Bill for your consideration, as I have taken that upon myself to him.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 22nd, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I sit down to give you a mere outline of what passed to-day. Townshend said that, in pursuance of the notice given before the holidays, he rose to submit to the House a proposition on the subject of Ireland; that he did not intend to go into the subject, but only to move for leave to bring in a Bill. He then read the motion; disclaimed every idea of impeaching the settlement of last year; stated that Lord Mansfield could not do otherwise; but that this had had the effect of increasing the doubts that had arisen in Ireland; that it was the intention of Government to leave no possibility of cavil upon the exclusive rights of judicature and legislation.

I seconded the motion, and said, That as the motion which was made went only to the bringing in a Bill, it was not my intention to trouble the House with much upon the subject; but that in the situation in which I stood I could not, consistently with those feelings which pressed so strongly upon me, and with my sense of the duty I owed to both kingdoms, refrain from expressing the sincere and heartfelt pleasure I received from seeing the business brought forward by Government in the earliest moment, and the eager and earnest wish of my heart that the Bill to be brought in in consequence of this motion might obtain the end proposed by it, and set those questions for ever at rest which it was hoped that the transaction of the last year had fully and finally quieted; that here I must disavow in the strongest manner all intention of casting any reflection, or of acquiescing in any reflection, which might be cast on the honour and integrity of the transaction of last year as conducted by the Government of this country, and by the gentlemen who treated with Government on the part of

Ireland; that those gentlemen had acted as true and sincere friends to their country, and to the harmony of the empire; that the right honourable gentleman who then moved the business in that House had declared at that time, and had repeated the declaration a few days ago, that those gentlemen treated with him upon the expressed and avowed principle of putting an end to every idea of legislation and jurisdiction on the part of Great Britain over Ireland; that as such I considered it; that the right honourable gentleman had also stated the reasons which operated, and I thought operated wisely, against the adoption of other ideas which had then occurred; that the dignity and honour of Ireland was too nearly connected with, and too inseparable from, the dignity and honour of Great Britain, to make them desire that Great Britain should humble herself by an acknowledgment that the right which she had so long exercised had been usurped; that, on the other hand, it would have been absurd to have asserted the right at the very moment that it was to be abandoned for ever: such an assertion could answer no good end, and could only serve to wound the feelings of a nation whom it was intended by that transaction to bind by the strongest ties of affection, as they were already bound by the strongest ties of interest, with Great Britain. These were the reasons why it had been brought forward in the manner in which it had; and every friend to both countries, or to either, must certainly wish that it had proved satisfactory. But it could not be concealed that doubts had arisen upon the operation and effect of the transaction, and that if such doubts had prevailed—if from reasons, possibly ill-founded, they had been adopted by many well-intentioned men, and if those doubts had been strengthened by the late decision of the Court of King's Bench, however necessary that decision might be, from the circumstance of the cause having been set down for hearing before anything had passed in the House on the subject of Ireland,

and if that decision induced a necessity—as it certainly did—of passing a Bill for preventing any writ of error from being received, it was surely an act of policy and magnanimity in Great Britain, it was consistent with the honour and dignity of the House to set that question for ever at rest by an authentic and solemn avowal of that which was avowed by all the parties to the transaction, and to place upon the records of Parliament a lasting monument of the good faith and justice of Great Britain.

It was with this view that I gave my most hearty consent and support to this motion; with this view that I hoped it would meet, not only with the general support, but, if I might be allowed to hope so much, with the unanimous concurrence of the House; because I wished very much to show to Ireland that it was the unanimous determination of the House to abide by those principles which had been unanimously adopted in the last session, which had at the opening of the present session received His Majesty's approbation, and had met again with the unanimous approbation of both Houses in their Addresses to the Throne; and because I wished also to demonstrate that nothing which had happened since last year—that no change which had taken place in the Government, either here or in Ireland; no alteration of the circumstances of this country, either with regard to Ireland or to the rest of the world; and particularly nothing of that which I hoped I, an uninformed man, might be allowed to call the near hope and prospect of peace—had made any difference whatever in those sentiments of justice, of liberality and of affection to Ireland which had actuated and, I trusted, ever would actuate, the conduct of the Parliament of Great Britain.

After this there was a long conversation rather than debate.

Eden said that he did not mean to oppose the motion; but that when he proposed the repeal last year, he had given his opinion that it would be and ought to be satisfactory. In the

first opinion he was confirmed by the following paragraph in the Addresses: "Gratified in this, we const:" &c., &c.; that he thought the other was equally evident from the transaction itself, &c.; but that from the moment he found that the contrary idea was taken up by Mr. Walsh's precision, by Mr. Flood's prodigious ability, and by the Recorder's integrity, he knew it would prevail. He then said that there were still matters which required adjustment; and instanced several acts made Irish by Yelverton's Bill, which would expire in this country in the case of peace, and the re-enacting of which would not prevent their dropping in Ireland; but I own I doubt this on the construction of Yelverton's Bill.

Fitzpatrick said he did not mean to oppose this Bill; but at the same time he was exceedingly sorry that the motion went beyond the mere case of judicature which called for the interference of Parliament; that it professed to remove jealousies and discontents; that this was impossible; that there would always be found men to start grounds of jealousies, &c.—men whose consequence arose only from ferment; that the body of the country was satisfied; spoke a good deal at different times about the Duke of Portland's friends and their honourable support.

Lord Beauchamp said, that as far as he understood the intentions of Government, he approved of them—understanding them to go to a complete derilection of the right in terms so as not to be undone again. He entered at large into the arguments against simple repeal; and, in answer to Fitzpatrick, who had dwelt much on the resolution of the Houses of Parliament as speaking the sense of the nation, in contradiction to the Volunteer resolutions, said that he wondered to hear such an argument from him, who took the sense of the people of England in taverns and at clubs, &c., &c.

Fitzpatrick replied to him: went over much the same ground; defended the simple repeal; then retorted upon

Lord Beauchamp; and took his pamphlet out of his pocket, and reading his last sentence, that his lips should be closed for ever upon the subject, observed that he, in his turn, was a little surprised, after this, to hear the noble Lord's lips opened to run a race with Government, &c., &c.

I then desired to explain, that so far from saying that the Bill was to be grounded on the insufficiency of the repeal, I had said the direct contrary, and had stated a few days ago in the House, my full opinion that the faith of Great Britain had thereby been pledged to Ireland upon the avowed principle of putting an end to every idea of legislation and jurisdiction over that kingdom, and that nothing was implied by the present motion which went to impeach that.

Fox then spoke. He went over the ground of simple repeal; defended Grattan and his friends very warmly; and seemed to imply pretty strongly, though he did not quite express it, that you was to abandon—to desert those men of high integrity and honour, whose great abilities were the smallest part of their merit, &c. It is impossible to go over the whole of what he said; but it chiefly turned upon these heads: he said that no Bill would do if there was not confidence; that such a system should be adopted as to ensure this confidence, not to humiliate the Parliament of Great Britain by bringing propositions founded on supposed discontents, &c.; that the judicature was given up, as far as related to appeals, by the repeal of the Declaratory Act; that writs of error were prohibited by the Irish Act; however, a Bill might be necessary to prevent here the exercise of a nugatory jurisdiction; but that if the preamble of that Bill was, as had been stated by Fitzpatrick and Lord Beauchamp, as a case to be approved of, to declare the intention, he did not conceive how it would alter the question at all, for if the repeal was ineffectual, it would not make it less so, &c.

I again got up to desire that it might be understood that I

had not said anything which could in any way be construed into an idea of abandoning, of deserting, &c., &c., men of whom I entertained the highest opinion—men in whose integrity I knew Government might confide with safety, and whose abilities were, as he had said, great as they were, the least part of their merit.

Mr. Percival said something about a law to try persons for crimes committed in Ireland in England, and desired we would attend to that, and give it up. I mean to do so. MacDonald asked if it was meant that all idea of legislation and jurisdiction should be given up. Townshend said, undoubtedly.

Pitt then closed the business with great ability. He said that he was happy to find that, although much conversation rather than debate had taken place, much of which he thought superfluous, still, as to the motion and the main object of it, the avowing in direct terms, &c., &c., that had been unanimously agreed to on all sides of the House. He added, in answer to Fox, that he trusted it would be found that the Government was placed, both in England and in Ireland, in the hands of persons who would not less merit the confidence, would adopt measures not less calculated to promote the peace, happiness and prosperity of Ireland, at the same time, with an attention not less scrupulous to the dignity of the English Parliament, than any other man or set of men whatever.

Thus ended this business, without any division or opposition, every man having prefaced his speech with a declaration of his intention not to oppose the motion. I cannot help thinking that, considering all circumstances, and particularly considering my own very delicate and awkward situation, the whole has not gone off ill. I am impatient to receive your approbation of Dunning's Bill. You see what Fox would say of a preamble.

You must not think of printing this debate, whatever you may do with my speech; because it would not be common justice to other people, whose speeches I have stated so very

loosely and shortly, and it would be known for a Government publication. I think, even for mine, you had better wait till you get the English papers, from which it would naturally be copied in Ireland, and then insert mine instead. Adieu.

Ever yours.

I enclose Mornington's account to Grattan.

In my reply to Fox I said, that so far from any desertion, &c., &c., of the Duke of Portland's friends, all that was intended was, in the expressive words of one of those gentlemen: that as it was now necessary that Great Britain should speak again upon the Irish subject, she should speak clearly and openly.

Those are not exactly his words; but they are in his letter to the "Trala Vol." Pray find them; for I think they describe the transaction well.

Rumours of resignations and changes, short as the term of the Administration had been up to this time, were beginning to be bruited abroad. As yet there was nothing certain: Pitt was firm, and Shelburne mysterious as usual; but it could no longer be concealed that the Cabinet, in addition to the dangers which threatened it from without, was suffering in its influence from internal dissensions.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 25th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

The enclosed memorial of Captain Mingay describes so very hard a case, that I could not resist sending it to you; although the answer which I gave to the Lord Advocate, who put it into

my hands, was that it must come through the Commander-in-Chief.

Sir Charles Thompson called upon me with the memorandum upon Sir J. Irvine. He had been ordered by the King to make it out for Lord Shelburne, who referred him through me to you. Upon the last paragraph, I observed that the effects were already sold before the balance due to Government was known. He then proposed the expedient of a temporary pension till a Government should fall, with a provision for applying such proportion of the income of the Government as should be thought fit, in discharge of the debt to the public account.

Bulkeley spoke to me yesterday from Lord Northington, about Lady Ligonier. I desired him to advise Lord Northington, as from himself, to write to you about it. If you should then think you can do anything in it, which I cannot help hoping, the obligation will lay upon Lord Northington and not upon Bulkeley.

Lord Clermont called upon me yesterday. He put in his claim to the Order, to which I gave the answer of non-residence. He said that he was always over in the Parliamentary winter, and had a house and establishment both in Dublin and in the country. I promised to write to you upon it, but gave him little encouragement, nor indeed did he press it much. Townshend tells me the King makes no difficulty about the *cordon bleu*, which of course you will magnify as infinitely more honourable, &c., &c.

The Post-Office here have been making a strange jumble, and have drawn up a most extravagant Act, God knows why, which they sent to Lord Clermont; I enclose it to you, with my answer to him. We shall be devilishly pressed in the House of Commons about our settlement, as the argument of war is at an end; and yet I doubt whether the people here have either leisure or knowledge sufficient even to talk about it yet. The latter I am sure I have not; and even if I had,

I should not think it wise to set the head of every Irish projector here and with you, perfectly afloat. In the meantime it will be matter of some difficulty to parry it.

Did I state to you in my account of the debate, Percival's question about the Act of Henry VIII., under which offences committed in the King's dominions beyond seas are triable in England? I rather think the answer will be, both to that and to what I think Lord Beauchamp will probably move, namely, a repeal of all English Acts, as far as they affect Ireland; that they fall to the ground themselves, except where confirmed by Irish Acts; but that if they were repealed, a question might arise how far even those would continue in force, according to Yelverton's Bill.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

P.S.—Yesterday, after making eighteen post-captains the day before, and after having attended the Cabinet in which the preliminaries were signed, Lord Keppel resigned the Admiralty. There are two ideas upon this; one is that he had always intended it as soon as peace was concluded, the other that he disapproved the articles. I think they are very consistent, and that if he had the first intention, he would take care to lay a groundwork for future opposition by refusing his concurrence to the peace; besides which, he probably feels little disposed to any mode of bringing about an event by which he loses so much consequence, and what is no less dear to him, so much patronage. I hear nothing said from any authority about his successor; the Duke of Grafton and Lord Howe seem to be the persons most talked of. Things are going on much too well in Ireland for them to think of, or I think for you to wish, especially at this moment, a different arrangement from either of those two.

It is very much reported, and I believe with certainty, that

the Duke of Richmond has retired from the Cabinet, and means at the same time to keep the Ordnance. What other people mean about that, is, I think, not quite so clear; though the Duke of Richmond's bitterest enemy could not, I should think, wish to see him in in a more degrading situation—such a situation, indeed, as it seems impossible should last for any length of time, or a moment longer than till a proper successor is found.

Minorca goes to France, and not to Spain, as Tom told you. That, I think, is *tant pis*.

I have just received your despatches of the 22nd, and found, to my great disappointment, that you had not then received mine of the 19th. It is upon the conviction of *bonne foi* that I act.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

I hope if the Admiralty should be offered you, you will deliberate very maturely, particularly on the prospect in the House of Commons here.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 27th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Although Townshend has probably informed you, yet I could not help writing a line by this messenger to congratulate you upon the capture of a French seventy-four and frigate, with which the war ends. They were taken near Barbadoes, by Hughes's squadron, after a short action with the 'Ruby,' the headmost ship.

I have already written by the post. The Duke of Richmond's resignation is not certain; and Townshend, Conway and Pitt certainly approve and stay in.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

Some particulars concerning the arrangements for the new Order of Knighthood will be read with curiosity. The pretensions of particular individuals to the Ribband of St. Patrick do not properly form materials for political history, and a few letters, in which such claims are freely canvassed, have been excluded from our selection. But the following, which touches upon the small preliminaries to which statesmen are forced to condescend on these ceremonial occasions, possesses more general interest of an illustrative kind.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Jan. 31st, 1783.

My dear Brother,

While you are persecuted by Lords Arran, Aldborough, Altamont, and *omne quod incipit* in A, I have had daily application from Lord Clermont, which I have promised to submit formally to you.

His family and connexions in Ireland and their weight is the first thing he states. To this I gave the answer of non-residence. He says that he always resides during the Parliament winter; that he has a house and establishment both in Dublin and in the country; and that he is more a resident than Lord Clanricarde or Lord Courtown. I then stated the impossibility of increasing the number, which had been a particular object with the King. His solution to that was, that when the King named sixteen, he certainly did not mean to include himself; and that the Thistle is twelve without the Sovereign. He proposes therefore that, as he has always been one of those talked of for it, and *as his friends make it* a point with him to apply, you should make it sixteen without the King, by adding his name.

You will therefore be so good as either to send him from yourself, or to commission me to write to him, a formal answer, *tel qu'il vous plaira.*

In general, the list is approved; but they object to the insertion of Lord Bechoe's name, and to the omission of Lord Meath's.

Fox and his people are very industrious in turning it into ridicule, by which I should think they would not increase their Irish popularity. And what is ridiculous, is that at the same time the Duke of Portland is taking pains to persuade all Irishmen that he meant to have done the same if he had staid long enough.

I have seen Edmonson, who has this day given me in a proposal, which you will not think much more moderate than you did his bill for the escutcheons (which, by the bye, he says you have never paid).

I should think the twenty guineas per Knight for the superintendence might very well be reduced to giving him *pro tempore*, and for this installation only, one of the heralds' places, in lieu of all travelling expenses and allowances. The Painters' Bill, as they call it, is fixed for the Bath, and might, I should think, reasonably be given to him at the same rate.

He is making out copies of the drawings; one or two alterations he has suggested which strike me. The first is the knots in the Collar. If they are gold, and the harp likewise, the whole will look, I think, too like a Lord Mayor's gold chain, and will make no show; nothing being more dull to the eye than plain gold. He wants to have them enamelled, so as to be like the strings and tassels of the mantle.

He will also send a drawing of the Badge, with the wreath of trefoil drawn in single leaves, instead of the full wreath, which looks, as he says truly, like a civic crown or oak garland. But this you will see in the drawing, and which looks best.

I wish that there was a statute to fix the plates of the Knights to remain in the stall in which they were first installed. In the chapel at Windsor they are obliged now to put them up loose, in order to their being removed; the consequence is, that they are frequently lost. Besides, the plates of the first sixteen might then be fixed in the centre of each stall as a mark of distinction for the founders.

In the Garter there are no plates in the Sovereign's stall. I should think that the Grand Master at each installation might be allowed to put up his, as the banner must of course always be the Sovereign's.

Edmonson proposes that he should have one of each article of the Painters' Bill made here, to carry with him as a pattern. If you see no objection, he might do Mornington's for this purpose. An advantage might be given to Edmonson by authorizing him to publish an account of the ceremony, with the arms and pedigrees of the Knights, &c., &c., to which they would of course subscribe.

Is the jewellery—I mean collars and badges—to be done in Ireland? I believe there is no workmanship at all of that sort there.

Townshend will, I believe, send the approbation to-night. It has waited upon an idea of the Prince of Wales, who gave it out to everybody that he had sent in to the King to ask for it.* This was the day after the King had given his approbation to the list, and named Prince Edward. I thought it right to wait a day or two, to know if the King would speak to him about it. He never has; and Townshend is to mention the Order again to-day, and send the approbation to night or to-morrow. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

* The Premier did ask for it, but was refused.

The "Coalition Administration" was now beginning to "loom" dimly in the distance. Various changes were whispered, and from day to day new reports got abroad of negotiations with Lord North's party. The first step towards the consummation of an alliance may be said to have been already taken when Townshend, abandoning the traditions of his party, told Mr. Grenville that he saw no reason for proscribing all Lord North's people from *office*, although he objected to giving them any share in the *Government*. The meaning of this ingenious distinction is clear. The Administration was tottering, and the only chance they saw of strengthening their position was to buy off the opposition of the followers of the late Cabinet. To swamp their opponents and at the same time keep the actual power in their own hands, was a piece of strategy which might be expected from the general character of Lord Shelburne's tactics. But it failed, and failed conspicuously. Mr. Grenville discerned clearly the danger of this clever plan, from which he could anticipate no other result than that of sapping the foundations of the existing Government. In the letters that follow we have a close running commentary on the state of parties, and the rumours that hourly agitated the public mind during this interval of intestine struggle. Mr. Grenville considered the circumstances of the Ministry hopeless, as, we gather from his previous communications, he appears to have done all throughout. Their conduct upon the Irish Bill, which was still destined to entail division and uneasiness, revealed to him the fatal want of unity, earnestness and activity in their councils; and even

if they had had no perils to guard against from without, he saw sources of weakness enough within the Cabinet itself to destroy all confidence in their stability. There were only two parties from whose ranks the Ministry could be recruited, and these two had hitherto acted in public life with the fiercest animosity towards each other. The attempts that were made to win over some of Lord North's adherents having failed, the only alternative left was to apply to Fox. That this application was actually made, and made in person by Pitt, who, with a thorough knowledge of the character of Fox, believed that the most direct mode of ascertaining his sentiments was not only the most honourable to both, but the most likely to attain its end, either by a candid refusal or immediate acceptance, is here authoritatively stated by Mr. Grenville. Fox's answer is conclusive as to the real obstacle which impeded all negotiation. While Lord Shelburne was in office nothing could be done: no party would consent to coalesce with him. The humiliating condition to which he had lowered the Administration, is shown in the straits to which it was now reduced—seeking support alternately from opposite parties, and finding its offers rejected in turn by both.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 6th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Townshend's messenger is now here, waiting for this letter; and as, by a mistake, I was not till now informed of his going to-night, I have only time to write a few lines, just to acknow-

ledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, and to say a very little upon the singular situation of things here.

To-day, when I delivered your despatches to Townshend, I entered into a conversation with him on this subject, saying that you trusted to him for information, &c., &c. He perfectly agreed with me in thinking that it could not go on without some new arrangement of some sort or other. At the same time, he said that he knew of no negotiation going on with Lord North. That there was no truth in the reports which have circulated so much that Jenkinson was to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, Pitt Secretary, and himself Paymaster. That he had good reason to believe that there had been a negotiation between Lord North and Fox, but that it was now off. That, for his own part, he saw no reason for proscribing all Lord North's people from *office*, but he should not like to see them in *Government*.

Upon this text it is not very easy to reason. The prevailing idea certainly is that Lord Shelburne is making overtures to Lord North. Whether those are to go to Cabinet arrangement, or only to provision for Lord North's family and offices of emolument, &c., for George North, &c., &c., I do not know; if the former, it is clear that he keeps it from the knowledge both of Townshend and Pitt; the latter, I have very good reason to believe, would object to it.

In the meantime a storm is brewing, and will probably burst when the preliminaries come to be considered, unless some event takes place before that time. Lord Keppel and the Duke of Richmond both assign the badness of the peace for their reason for resigning. Lord Carlisle does the same, but I understand his great objection goes to the Loyalists, to whom he considered his personal honour engaged. The report of the day is, that the Duke of Grafton has followed their example. Of this Townshend said not one word to me, nor did I hear it till after I had seen him. This rather makes me disinclined to

believe it, though his Grace has certainly had a kind of flirtation with Fox for some days past.

Upon the whole, the only thing which I can at all venture to pronounce with certainty, is that it cannot do as it is; and that if Fox's people continue, as I believe they will, to stand aloof, they must either all resign, or fill up the vacancies as fast as they occur, day after day, with Lord North's people. *En quo discordia cives prodaxit miseros.*

In the case of an immediate resignation, Lord North's people will come in by storm (Fox not having the least chance): in that of gradual admission, they will sap the Government by degrees. In either case, there is too much reason to fear the return of the old system of corruption on one side, and faction on the other.

With regard to the peace, I own I cannot think it so bad, all things considered. If one measures it by an *uti possidetis*, it is surely advantageous; and I see no reason for being at all confident that another campaign would have put us in a better situation to negotiate. In this line, I had intended to have stated my ideas on the day of debate in the House of Commons; but I am deterred by reading your opinions, and by a fear, I believe too well grounded, that you will take an active part the other way; and I cannot reconcile myself to the appearance of a Scotch family. If it had not been for this, I think it would have had a handsome appearance in the hour of their distress, and would not have had a bad effect in Ireland; if, indeed, we are any longer interested there, which I begin to doubt. Adieu, my dearest brother.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 8th, 1783, Nine, P.M.

My dear Brother,

I wrote to you this morning an account, which you will receive at the same time with this letter, of a conversation with Lord Bellamont. I little thought, at that time, that I should now have one of so different a nature to detail to you, which I had, just before dinner, with Percy. He said, that although he might be thought officious in coming to speak to me upon a subject, upon which it had not been thought proper to make him any communication, yet he could not help saying that he thought it inconsistent with his duty to you, &c., &c., not to state to me that he had last night procured from the House of Commons a copy of the Bill proposed; and that he was fully convinced that, so far from answering the purpose intended by it, the country would be thrown by it into a much greater flame than ever. I asked him to state his objections; he said they would be best seen by the form which he had drawn up, and would leave with me for my consideration.

I did not detail to him the many objections which occur to me upon his Bill, and particularly that most insuperable difficulty of its asserting what the right now is, in contradiction to the declared opinion of almost every lawyer in this country. But I said, in general terms, that the Bill in question had been drawn up with great consideration; and that it was a matter of infinite delicacy, on account of the great variety of prejudices to be encountered on both sides of the water. He asked if this was the form which had been sent to you, and if you had consulted people there upon it. To this I could not but answer that I understood you had, though you do not say a word to me upon that subject, and it is a question which will most certainly be asked in the House of Commons.

This unexpected difficulty has made me determine to postpone the second reading of the Bill till I have an answer to this letter, unless I should in the meantime receive one from you perfectly approving, and stating the opinions of people in Ireland as agreeing with yours upon it.

It is certainly to be observed, that the whole of this difficulty has arisen from want of communication from Ministry to you. Because, if you had known that they were determined to admit no recognition of the existing right, it would have been well worth considering whether anything short of that would not be worse than as it was before. Instead of that, they receive your resolutions and your Bill, and then pledge themselves, and suffer me to pledge both them and you to *a Bill;* after which, they first say that they will allow of nothing which admits the *original* right, and when beat from that ground, that they will not have anything asserting the *present* right. It then only remained, as we were pledged to *a Bill,* to consider whether this was not the best form of a Bill to be drawn on such principles.

Whatever your answer has been to Townshend's despatch, I hope at least that it has been coolly and temperately expressed, as he told me he meant to represent to you that an advantage had been taken against you from the warmth of your late despatches.

Another advantage which will arise from deferring the second reading will be, that by that time this strange, unsettled situation of things must have taken some form; and I do not believe that this form will be such as you will choose to act under in Ireland. In that case, it certainly will not be worth our while to engage our characters to a measure which the folly of your successor may render pernicious; which must at all events be precarious; and which England will most certainly repent whenever the hour of her insolence shall return. We took the business out of the hands of Lord Beauchamp, because

it ought to be conducted by Government; and that will be the best reason for resigning it into other hands whenever we shall cease to stand in that character; which *whenever* must, I think, arrive in the course of a very few days.

Jemmy is to dine at Lord Shelburne's on Monday, when he will probably be able to tell you more. I go to Townshend to-morrow, and mean to try what I can get from him.

At least we have the satisfaction to reflect, that if your reign has been short, it has not been dishonourable to you; and that having taken the Government at a most difficult and inauspicious moment, you will quit it with more real and more deserved popularity than the Duke of Portland, notwithstanding the uncommon advantages which threw themselves in his way.

Of myself I say nothing, except that wherever and whatever I am, I shall always consider myself as deriving honour, consequence and happiness from your character and success.

In these sentiments believe me,

My dearest brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

I am able to tell you nothing with any certainty as to the state of parties; but I think that neither Lord Shelburne nor Fox are strong enough to keep the Government without a coalition with Lord North's people, and that the latter are too strong to sell themselves unless they be admitted to form part of the *Government*. Fox's people no longer deny his negotiating with Lord North.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 8th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Lord Nugent tells me that when he saw the Primate, he observed to him that, by the list of officers of the Order, there was no mention made of any prelate, although in other respects the Garter was implicitly followed; and he says he thought, by the Primate's manner, that he himself wanted to be that prelate; as that officer is, you know, superior in rank to the Chancellor of the Order.

If this be the case, I can see no reason why the offer should not be made to him, which might still be done by your writing to say that that office had been omitted, from the impossibility of giving it to any other person but himself, and a doubt how far he might like the trouble; but that you had daily expected him in Ireland, and meant to ask him the question; but the time now drawing near, &c., &c.

Nothing else has passed on the subject, except a third application from Lord Clermont, through General Cuninghame, to whom I stated the total impossibility, &c. I expected Lord Bellamont to have asked it to-day; but he did not drop a word upon the subject.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Feb. 11th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Things are drawing near to their crisis. Lord Shelburne's weakness is every day more apparent. Nothing is clearer than that he cannot stand a week without some addition. The strongest proof of this is what Pitt told me to-day: that it being thought necessary to make some attempt at a junction

with Fox, he had seen him to-day, when he asked one question, viz., whether there were any terms on which he would come in. The answer was, None, while Lord Shelburne remained; and so it ended.

Upon this, I think one may observe, that the one must be very desperate, the other very confident, before such a question could be so put and so answered.

I told him I was glad the attempt was made, though I was not at all surprised at the event. He said that he thought they would now be justified in seeking for additional strength elsewhere. I said I thought so too, but that I could not help trusting that this expression did not go to include the idea of bringing back any of the old people *to Cabinet offices;* that I thought the line was clear that it was the duty of every man to do his utmost to keep the Government in such hands as were fit and able to hold it (under which description I could not include any of that set); but that when it was so placed, it was idle to say that support was not to be looked for where it could be had. He said that, without making professions, he could with truth say, that this had always been his idea. And so our conversation ended—at least, this was the only material part of it.

There is no doubt but that they have been making proposals to Jenkinson, and these must have failed before the other offer could be made. On the other hand, I know for certain that negotiations, *through more than one channel,* have been *entamé* between Fox and Lord North. This must be *bien en train,* if one may judge by what I tell you in this letter.

In that case, as well as in that which I put to ——, I take it for granted that I know your line; and whatever the effect of that line must be with respect to my own fortunes, I have infinitely too great a concern for your honour and my own, not to desire and wish it most eagerly. The only thing which pains me is the consideration of Bernard. If the interval

should afford you an opportunity for that, I should depart in peace. Adieu.

Believe me,

Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 15th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I have this day received your letter of the 9th, and have the greatest satisfaction at that which you express respecting this long-agitated Bill. Since you wrote that, but before this time, you will have received a letter from me, enclosing a Bill proposed by Percy. I confess his dissent alarmed me a good deal at the time, ignorant as I was whether you might not see it in the same light. I am convinced now that it proceeds only from his resentment at not being consulted previous to its being fixed upon. The second reading stands now for Wednesday; but I doubt whether it can come on, as I understand the call previously fixed for that day is to be insisted upon. Before that time, I shall probably have received your letter, informing me whom you have consulted, as that is very material, particularly with regard to my being able to urge Grattan and Yelverton's authority against Fox and Fitzpatrick. At all events, however, I mean now to proceed in it on that day if I can, if not as early as possible, and to *bring* you the account of the third reading in the House of Commons.

All this proceeds upon the idea that nothing of a different nature happens before; which I still think there is every reason to imagine. I cannot learn whether Fox and Lord North have settled their coalition so as to act together on Monday. Jenkinson is, I believe, secured to us; but at what price, and with what following, I am utterly ignorant; and on that the whole undoubtedly depends. As soon as I know

anything, you shall hear it in the most expeditious manner; but I do not give you my conjectures when they are merely such, because I know people at a distance are apt to give them more weight than they deserve, and I should be sorry to mislead you.

The Duke of Rutland is Lord Steward, and it is said he is called to the Cabinet. This, to my mind, argues great weakness indeed. In the House of Lords, Lord Pembroke moves the Address; in the House of Commons, T. Pitt. This, I think, does not show very great strength. The seconders I know not.

You have several times mentioned the Pension List; and I have as often forgot to tell you, that I inquired in the first instance without speaking to Pitt, and found that, whatever reform is to be made, rests wholly with Lord Shelburne, who appears to act in it on no system, but to add or to take away at his pleasure. Jackson and Jemmy Grenville remonstrated some days ago at the Treasury against signing any more till they saw that the act was to be complied with.

Upon the subject of the Fisheries, I have had a conversation with Hunter Blair, the member for Edinburgh. There has been a meeting of the Scotch members to support a Bill in Parliament to extend the bounty now given in England for the Scotch coast, to fish caught on the Irish coast, and to give the fishermen a power of landing and drying on the Irish, as on the Scotch coast. They went to Lord Shelburne, who referred them to me. I desired Blair to send me a copy of the memorial, and an abstract of the several British and Irish Acts on the subject.

The Irish are very ill done, as the two most material, in 1764 and 1776, are omitted. I do not find by any Irish Act whether the Irish fishermen have the power of landing and drying; if they have, I should think it *does* extend to all the King's subjects; as the Act of 1782, restraining the *bounty* to Irish ships, does not touch the power of fishing. If they have

it not, no English Act now to be made can give it them; but if they have it, we may extend the bounty as we please.

The reason they assign for wishing it is, that the herrings shift yearly from one part to another of the narrow seas, and that as the Irish have, by an English Act, the privilege of fishing on the Scotch coast, it is but just that the English and Scotch should fish on the Irish when the fish are there, as has been the case these two last years. The consideration presses, as the seamen now to be discharged will, of course, many of them return to Scotland to find employment, and the fishing cannot, as they state, be carried on at all, but by such indulgence as they apply for.

Lord Glandon was with me to-day, to ask whether Coppinger is one of the new Judges, and, in that case, who he should bring in for his borough. He told me that he had sold the other seat to Sir W. Gleadowe. I did not dare ask whether he was engaged for the next Parliament, because it would have given too much of a hint of the dissolution. I therefore only said, that I did not believe the names were fixed for the three Judges.

Lord Bellamont is outrageous about the Order, and has been *with Townshend* about it; but not with me. I have sent your paper about Irvine to Lord Shelburne, but have had no answer. I enclose you a letter from Lord Clanricarde, with my answer. Lord Nugent has seen him, and says he is beyond measure flattered, and well-disposed towards you.

I shall go to Lord Shelburne on Tuesday or Wednesday, and press him about the peerages, &c., &c. As to applying to Townshend, it is useless; for he has all the disposition in the world, but not a jot more.

I own I think the 18th of March will be rather too soon after the installation, and will look too like a trick, and too much in the style of the St. Bartholemi: and yet, if you wait much longer, you will fall among their cursed assizes; besides

which, new grounds for tests will spring up, whereas there are now none, absolutely none.

Adieu, my dear brother,

Believe me, ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

I think our distant projects for the Government of Ireland, are something like Horace Walpole's "Butterfly and Rose."

Hester is as well as possible.

Pray be on your guard, as I have great reason to believe that your conduct is watched, and your language and conversation reported to Fox, by a man about the Castle, who keeps up a constant correspondence in that quarter. I need not name him to you.

On the 17th of February, the terms of the peace were brought under the consideration of both Houses of Parliament. To do Lord Shelburne justice, he defended them with considerable ability, as being the best the country had a right to expect, or, probably, could obtain. In the Lords, the Address was carried by an insignificant majority: in the Commons, Ministers were defeated. As it was upon the negotiation and settlement of the peace that Lord Shelburne had solely relied all along for the preservation of his Government, the effect of this defeat was decisive. It was the doom of the Ministry; and the bolt was launched by that strange combination which had been growing up in secret for several weeks, which was now openly avowed for the first time, and which was too powerful to be resisted. The coalition had, in fact, already been determined upon. Fox frankly stated it, and supported the Amendment, conjointly with Lord North, in a

speech of considerable force and vehemence. However the House might have been prepared by the rumours of the day for this result, it excited universal surprise, and not a little virtuous indignation. Mr. Powis observed that, it was "an age of strange confederations; a *monstrous coalition* had taken place between a noble Lord and an illustrious commoner—the lofty asserter of the prerogative had joined in an alliance with the worshippers of the majesty of the people." Such words had more purpose and meaning in those days than they would have in our own, and the startling antithesis rang through a debate as remarkable for invective on the one side, as for the confession of weakness on the other. Mr. Grenville and Lord Bulkeley communicated the issue to Lord Temple, in the following hasty notes.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Feb. 18th, 1783, Ten, A.M.

My dear Brother,

I write these few lines by a messenger, to let you know that this morning, at seven o'clock, after a debate of fifteen hours, the House of Commons divided: 209 for the original Address upon the peace, and 224 for the Amendment.

The Address was very cautiously worded, and by no means conveyed any strong approbation. The Amendment was merely to assure His Majesty that we *will* consider the preliminaries, and in the meantime we consider ourselves bound strictly to adhere to the articles to which, by the ratification, the national faith is pledged; with something about the loyalists.

The Address was moved and seconded by T. Pitt and Wilberforce; the Amendment, by Lord John Cavendish and St.

Andrew St. John. Lord North spoke next to them, in approbation of it. Fox avowed the coalition with Lord North, and was a good deal attacked upon it, particularly by Powis. Tom, to my infinite joy, did not speak. Jemmy spoke. Rigby spoke and voted with us.

In the House of Lords, the Amendment was a strong censure: this was rejected, 69 to 55.

Where this is to end, God knows! *Je n'en scai rien.* I am too much fatigued to be able to give you any particulars of the debate. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

LORD BULKELEY TO LORD TEMPLE.

Berkeley Square,
Tuesday Night, Feb. 18th, 1783.

My dear Lord Temple,

I conclude your brother William, and Jemmy Grenville, have given you exact accounts of the strange politics of the present moment. By a junction formed between Lord North and Fox, on Sunday evening last, the Address in our House was not carried; but the Amendment was, 224 to 208. The landed property was mostly with Government, and for the Address. There were, however, many country gentlemen for the Amendment; and among the rest, Sir William Williams. My good father-in-law voted in the majority, as a small return for my bringing him into Parliament, and he is patted on the back by George Byng, Plummer, &c., for the *noble, disinterested part* he takes, while I am looked upon as a black sheep; of which I console myself, and have reason to console myself, when I see the views and motives of some great political characters to be so profligate and abandoned. Lord North and Charles Fox acting together in public life, is a new and extraordinary scene! Many people say it was only for

last night; but I believe the arrangement has completely taken place, and the overthrow of the present Ministry is consequently certain. The Amendment in the Lords was very strong, and full of censure, and was negatived only by 14; the numbers being, 69 to 55.

I cannot conceive it possible the Ministry can stand three days longer; I must therefore hope, whatever line you adopt, it may be upon the maturest reflection and deliberation, and not in a hurry. The new Ministry, if they can agree, will be very powerful in Parliament. At the same time, there are great numbers of members who are outrageous at the junction of Fox with Lord North, who, it is said, is to have all his friends provided for, to advance to the House of Peers, and to leave the Government to Charles Fox, Duke of Portland, &c.

Sincerely yours,

BULKELEY.

The Primate proposed the prelateship to me. I will therefore call there to offer it in your name.

The next letter, written on the 19th, is very important. Mr. Grenville here collects the actual circumstances affecting the state of parties from the most authentic sources, and places them before Lord Temple for his consideration, in reference to the course he might deem it due to his own honour to take. We learn, from this statement, that the coalition was not yet finally arranged, although it had been carried into effective execution, as against the Ministry. It had been sufficiently cemented for the purpose of overthrowing one Government, but was not yet sufficiently consolidated for the establishment of another. It was one thing for Lord North and Fox to agree in their opposition to Lord Shelburne, and

another to unite upon the distribution of offices and a distinct line of policy. There were yet many old wounds to be healed, many differences of opinion to be reconciled, and much personal asperity to be soothed, before Fox and Lord North could satisfy the claims and resentments of their adherents, and combine in the formation of a Government. We learn also from this letter, that the King was strenuous in his support of Lord Shelburne (which had been obvious enough all throughout), and that he had now prevailed upon him, as he had before done with Lord North, to persevere in the face of the desperate phalanx that was arrayed against him. Government trusted to the divisions which were understood to be agitating the new Opposition, and which it was hoped would ultimately lead to its dissolution.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 19th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I wrote to you yesterday morning by a messenger, in order that you might receive the earliest information of the event of our decision. I was then infinitely too much harassed by the fatigue and want of sleep to attempt entering into the detail of the debate, being indeed scarcely able to hold my pen at all. You will since have seen it at length in the papers. I therefore say nothing upon that subject.

I have since at several different times sat down to write to you fully upon the situation of things here, and upon your letter of the 11th, which I received last night. But I find it so difficult to offer any reasonable conjecture upon the probable event, and things have taken so different a turn from that which you supposed, and on which you argue, that I have

thought it better to confine myself to the following facts (being all I know) on the authenticity of which you may depend. From them you will yourself collect the different circumstances which may occur, upon which you will be [enabled] to form a decision very material to your future character, honour, and happiness. If any of these should take place before I hear from you again, you may depend on the earliest notice which I can give you.

In the first place, Lord Shelburne never has made any offer whatever to Lord North.

Secondly, the coalition between Lord North and Fox is very far from being formed; so far indeed, that *I know* they have differed, not only on loaves and fishes, but on the subject of high and responsible office, and particularly about the Treasury itself, which was not settled this morning.

Thirdly, the King is decidedly with Lord Shelburne. His opinion of Fox I apprehend not to be altered, nor his former resentment against Lord North much softened by their present conduct. Rigby and Jenkinson both voted with us: the latter avowedly excluded from the proposed arrangement.

Fourthly, it is the intention of Ministry to wait the event of another question in the House of Commons. The subject is to be resumed on Friday, when this question will probably occur. And this they do in compliance with the ——'s wishes. The Duke of Grafton totters, but has not actually resigned.

The division was very respectable on our side. Almost all the country gentlemen voted with us. Many of them are outrageous with Fox upon the idea of his coalition. Lord North's share of the 224 is computed from 160 to 170.

Our Bill was read a second time to-day, but so early, that I was not down. Percival asked some question about his idea; you have never said anything to me upon it. It is committed for this day sev'nnight; before that time, chaos will probably have taken some form; in the meantime I cannot but fear the

most serious and alarming consequences from the impression which this division must make in France, Spain, and above all, in Holland.

Pray write as soon as you can, and believe me

Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

P.S. I shall see the Speaker to-morrow.

I have delayed writing this so long, that I find it is too late to send it by the post, and it is not I think worth an express. I will therefore keep it for your tailor, who goes to-morrow, and tells me he rides post. If so, you will get it sooner; and if anything should occur before to-morrow evening, I shall be able to state it.

20th.

I hear nothing new to-day. Lord J. Cavendish moves to-morrow, and is supposed to intend censure. If so, we shall very probably see the new alliance divided, especially if their differences continue, which I know not. I have not seen Percy, but shall to-morrow; I called to-day, but he was out.

Lord Beauchamp says he will not oppose our Bill; nor, I imagine, in this state of things, will Fox. I need not say that at this moment no business goes on, and consequently it is in vain to talk to them about the different points in your despatches.

"Non ipsa si velit Salus
Servare prorsus hanc potest Rempublicam!"

Adieu, my dear brother, you shall hear from me again on Saturday morning; but in the meantime pray let me hear from you as soon as you can.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

I just hear that the Duke of Grafton has resigned.

The King, who was not expected in town till the 19th, came up suddenly on the 18th, immediately on the receipt

of the intelligence of the Ministerial defeat. On the 20th, General Cuninghame, writing to Lord Temple, informs him that the Duke of Grafton had resigned the day before, having intimated his intention to do so on the preceding Monday; that he had just learned that Mr. Fox and Lord North had adjusted their differences; and that the outline of an Administration had been actually agreed upon—the Devonshires to have the Treasury, probably in the person of the Duke of Portland, and Fox, Chancellor of the Exchequer. "The political world," adds General Cuninghame, "is in a ferment, and a few days must decide the complexion of a new Administration. Every one hopes and believes it will be on a broad bottom; and your Excellency will probably be at liberty to choose your situation." On the next day, the same correspondent announces that Lord Shelburne "is determined to stand the thunder of the House of Commons," on a resolution which was to be brought forward that night, to show that the peace was inadequate. He goes on to state that the issue of the debate was doubtful, and that Lord Shelburne was by no means disposed to give up without a struggle. "If the Opposition should be beat from there not being sufficient evidence before them, an inquiry will be instituted. No man at this hour pretends to say how the question will be decided. One may get a beat [bet?] of hundreds at either side. So many difficulties arise in arranging a new Administration, that I now understand Lord Shelburne will not easily yield his pretensions." In the few hours that elapsed since he had written the former letter, General Cuninghame had reason to doubt the correctness of his information respecting the validity of the agreement amongst the

opponents of Government. "I now doubt," he observes, "very much of the possibility of arranging Mr. Fox's and Lord North's friends in such a manner as to make their system carry the appearance of permanency." The inconstancy of the reports in circulation reflected faithfully the uncertainty that hung over the action of all parties; and in that uncertainty lay the principal, perhaps the only, ground of hope that was left to Lord Shelburne.

That the negotiations in the meanwhile for a coalition had advanced to something like an intelligible point, and that the Duke of Portland looked with some confidence to the Treasury, is placed beyond all doubt by the following confidential communication, in which His Grace, in anticipation of the establishment of the new Ministry, proposes to Lord Temple his continuance in office as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. It would have been so utterly inconsistent with the high character of Lord Temple to have accepted this office under circumstances which he held to be injurious to the moral influence of the party leaders, and out of which no solid or durable system of administration could be rationally expected, that it will not excite much surprise to find his Lordship declining the flattering offer of the Duke of Portland.

It should be remembered, in reference to Lord Temple's reply to His Grace's "secret and confidential" communication, that the Duke of Portland had held the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland under the second Rockingham Administration, and was, therefore, qualified to appreciate the inconveniences arising from frequent changes in

the Government. It is to that circumstance Lord Temple alludes, when he recalls to his Grace's recollection the "jealousy which had been felt in so many parts of Ireland at his resignation."

THE DUKE OF PORTLAND TO LORD TEMPLE.

(Most Secret and Confidential.)

London, Saturday Evening,
Feb. 22nd, 1783.

My dear Lord,

The events of Monday and last night must have been communicated to you, and their consequences must be too obvious to render it necessary for me to point them out. What effect they may have upon my situation and that of my friends, it is impossible to say; but the supposition of a probability that they may tend to our being intrusted with the Administration will not suffer me to conceal the wish I should in that case most anxiously entertain for your Excellency's continuance in the Government of Ireland. As Mr. Townshend's friendship induced him to communicate to you my sentiments upon your appointment, you cannot be surprised at my presumption in the hope I now take the liberty of expressing to you; nor will it, I trust, be thought unjustifiable or unreasonable, notwithstanding the endeavours which it appeared to be my duty to exert for the removal of Lord Shelburne from any confidential employment in the King's service. I shall not trouble your Excellency with the reasons for my conduct, as a reference to the mode of Lord Shelburne's appointment is sufficient to explain them, even without the comment which his conduct affords; but as it is not unlikely that the means which have been represented to you to have been taken in the course of this short but successful attempt may in some degree prejudice us

in your opinion, I am desirous of trespassing upon your patience for a few moments to assure you that no deviation from the principles upon which I have acted throughout my whole political life has been or is to be the price of the assistance we have had in attaining that object. If, therefore, it should be the King's pleasure to place the Government in our hands, the powers of carrying it on must be given to those who are looked upon to be Whigs, and were considered to be such by our late most excellent friend, Lord Rockingham. *All* the responsible efficient offices will be required and insisted upon to be given to persons of that description; and though Lord North or others of the old Administration may make a part of such a new arrangement, it will be made a *sine quâ non* condition that the powers of Government shall be solely vested in those who have the advantage of being denominated the friends of the late Lord Rockingham. I have thought it necessary to state this outline of our *determinations* to your Excellency, to counteract any misrepresentation that may be made of the basis or purport of our junction with Lord North (to which I conceive it may be liable, from the very false and groundless accounts which are reported to have been transmitted to Ireland of Mr. Fox's speech on Mr. Townshend's motion for the Bill respecting the Irish Judicature, which I myself heard, and with which I was so satisfied, upon account of those whom it was intended to support, of him whom it was intended to reprobate, and whom I consider as the arch-enemy of Ireland—I mean Mr. H. Flood—that I should have been happy to have spoken it *verbatim et literatim*), and to inform you of the terms upon which I aspire to so much of your confidence as to flatter myself that you will be kind enough to give me the most convincing proof of it that a public station is capable of affording, which is that of remaining in the Lieutenancy of Ireland. This request is certainly premature, and very possibly may be useless, as I may never be authorized to make it; but as it is

not less a testimony of my regard for the public than of my esteem and respect for your Excellency, I do not hesitate at depositing it in your custody, and have great satisfaction in the idea of leaving with you such a pledge of my zeal for the welfare of both kingdoms.

I am,

Most sincerely,

Your Excellency's most faithful and obedient servant,

PORTLAND.

His Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant, &c., &c., &c.

(ANSWER.)

LORD TEMPLE TO THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

Dublin Castle, March 2nd, 1783.

MY DEAR LORD,

A course of westerly winds having for the last anxious week cut off our communication with England, six mails crowded upon me yesterday such a load of public business, that I was forced to delay till this morning the acknowledgments which are so much due for your Grace's secret and confidential letter. I need not say how truly I feel the extent of the partiality which I have so often experienced, and which has certainly influenced you against your better judgment in the offer which you are so good as to make to me. Removed as I am from the immediate scene of English politics, I am but little able to decide upon those minutiæ, which are often the principal springs which move the machine; and under this want of information, I must confess myself much distressed by the means employed to obtain an object, in which, for obvious reasons, I should probably not have engaged, but which in all contingencies I should hardly have ventured to pursue in the mode which has succeeded. Both kingdoms stand in need of a solid and substantial

Government; and in that spirit of candour which I am sure will entitle me to your Grace's good-will, I must acknowledge that such an arrangement as is proposed does not hold out to me any reasonable expectation of a duration, even as long as that of the Ministry which it supersedes; and consequently, that the removal of Lord Shelburne (even if that could be an object with me) would not compensate in my mind for the real and solid mischief which these frequent and rapid changes, which have already taken place, and which in a few months will again happen, must always bring upon the Government of both kingdoms; and I need not give your Grace a more convincing argument than by recalling to your mind the jealousy which was felt in so many parts of Ireland at your resignation, and the ferment which the unsettled form of Government brought forward.

I have stated these few observations from an impulse which I cannot suppress. If I really was vain enough to think my continuance in this or any official situation was important to the public, I would sacrifice much to endeavour to reconcile my feelings to it; but as I am certain that your Grace's friendship alone could have suggested to you the option which you have given to me, I shall truly consult that, in which I shall always take the strongest interest, your Grace's advantage, honour and reputation, by enabling you to send to this very difficult situation some other person, who may have equal advantages with myself in possessing your good-will, and whose abilities might enable him to return that debt, by giving solid and material strength to your Administration. But be assured, my dear Lord, that I am truly sensible of the value of the offer, and that this is a real gratification to me. And with these sentiments,

I am, my dear Lord,

Your very obliged and obedient servant,

NUGENT TEMPLE.

His Grace the Duke of Portland.

Lord Shelburne tendered his resignation on the 24th. "Whether," says Mr. Grenville, "that resignation was to be accepted immediately, and was or was not to be followed by the others, I do not know." It appears, however, from a letter of General Cuninghame's, that the colleagues of the Ministers were waiting in the ante-chamber, prepared to follow him into retirement.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 24th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I don't write to you by a messenger, because I have nothing decisive to tell you. Lord Shelburne went in to-day to resign. Whether that resignation was to be accepted immediately, and was or was not to be followed by the others, I do not yet know. Nobody has yet been sent to. The report of Lord Gower, or some other substitution, is very prevalent.

Before you receive this, you will probably have heard from me by the messenger; if not, you may depend on it that nothing is settled. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

GENERAL CUNINGHAME TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, Feb. 24th, 1783, Two o'clock, P.M.

My Lord,

Lord Shelburne is now in the closet, *resigning*, and most of his colleagues in the outward room, to follow his example. The Chancellor's resignation is doubtful. General Conway has been ill since Friday; this morning St. Anthony's fire broke out in his legs. Mr. Townshend will move the Commons to adjourn. The whole political system is now in such confusion, that speculation would only tend to mislead.

I heartily wish your Excellency whatever you wish yourself, and am, with the most perfect respect and attachment,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most faithful and obedient humble servant,

ROBERT CUNINGHAME.

His Grace the Lord Temple, &c., &c.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Tuesday Night, Feb. 24th, 1783.

I expected before this to have dispatched you a messenger, with an account of the new arrangement; but I write by the post, as I can only tell you, that neither the Duke of Portland nor Lord North have yet been sent for, and that the prevailing report in the House of Commons to-day was Lord Shelburne's resignation, and a system, to be composed of the remains of his Administration, joined with Lord Gower.

The House has adjourned till Friday. Before that, I shall probably be able to write to you more at length. Nothing can be a stronger confirmation than this, of the truth of your idea of reluctance and disinclination, &c., &c.

There is no other news here, nothing else having been talked of for the last week but arrangements. The hungry mouths are gaping very wide, and have fixed their eyes on morsels which may possibly never drop into them. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 26th, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I do not yet write to you by the messenger, as I cannot tell you what *is* (nothing being yet settled), but only what *is not*.

The offer has been made to Pitt of the Treasury, with *carte blanche;* which, after two days' deliberation, he has this day refused. No other person has yet been sent for. Lord Gower was with the King on Monday, but I believe no offer made to him.

Whether the King has any resource left, or whether he will (as I rather think) acquiesce, God knows. *Voilà tout que je sais;* and so, good night.

GENERAL CUNINGHAME TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, Wednesday Night,
Feb. 25th, 1783.

My Lord,

I have this instant heard Lord North say, he believed that Mr. Pitt was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer; and I know a variety of circumstances to confirm it. The same army will be fought under another general, in the expectation of its being strengthened by deserters before the next action.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

My Lord,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

Robert Cuninghame.

GENERAL CUNINGHAME TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, Thursday Night,
Feb. 26th, 1783.

My Lord,

There seems now no doubt of Mr. Pitt's having been offered, and having refused, being First Lord of the Treasury. What may or may not happen to-morrow, nobody can con-

jecture. The House of Commons will probably adjourn till Monday.

I have the honour to be, with true respect,

My Lord,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

ROBERT CUNINGHAME.

The refusal of Pitt, who was sagaciously waiting his opportunity—foreseeing what would come of these desperate efforts to patch up an Administration—and the King's personal aversion to Fox, and dissatisfaction with Lord North for his union with him, rendered it necessary to look for help elsewhere. In this extremity Lord Temple was thought of, as one of the few men whose courage and integrity might be confidently relied upon.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Feb. 28th, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have been, for these last five days, in the most anxious expectation of being able to write to you something certain about the situation of things here. Still, however, they remain in the same unsettled state. The invincible repugnance continues to operate in the strongest manner; it is avowed, and was certainly the cause of the late offer, which has been declined; notwithstanding the promises of support from many of those who have voted with Lord North till now, and who are disgusted either at his union with Fox, or his conduct to the King.

To-day, the prevalent report was that you had been sent for. This I know to be otherwise, in present, though I think it not unlikely to happen; as I know the King's wish—at all events to exclude Fox and North, and particularly the first. If it

should be so, lights will undoubtedly be given you which I cannot furnish, to which will of course be added every light which it is in my power to procure. At present I rather believe, and from no bad authority, that the idea is, Lord Gower at the Treasury, Jenkinson, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Townshend to manage the House of Commons, Pitt resigning. But the whole, even from the best information, is but a scene of conjecture. In the meantime, the situation of the country cannot be described. The Government is broke up just at the moment when a Government was most wanted. Our internal regulations, our loan, our commerce, our army, everything is at a stand, while the candidates for office are arranging their pretensions: in the meantime, we have no money, and our troops and seamen are in mutiny.

One thing, however, is worth your attention: a Bill is to be brought in on Monday to open our ports to American ships, putting them, in all respects, on the footing of natural-born subjects; which regulation is to continue, till it is known that they refuse to do the like by us. How can this be done in Ireland without a Parliament?

I cannot apply, for I have nobody to apply to, about your Peerages. Adieu, my dear brother. One thing is worse than bad Government, viz.: the having no Government at all.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

I still retain my wish of *bringing* over the third reading, as I can be of no use in the House of Lords; although I believe with you, that the disposition to oppose does exist.

All parties were desirous of strengthening themselves by an alliance with Lord Temple. The coalition sought to engage him even before they were themselves in a position to treat; and there seems to be no doubt that, at this

juncture, when every succeeding hour brought new incidents and unforeseen difficulties, a movement was going on for placing him at the head of the Government. Mr. Astle, writing to his Lordship on the 1st of March, says: "It is the opinion of men of different parties that a majority in Parliament would act with your Lordship if you was at the head of the Treasury. From what I have collected in the course of this day, I agree entirely in this opinion. Some who have voted with Lord North would draw with you." How far this contemplated escape from the embarrassments that impeded the coalition might have been matured into a practical shape had Lord Temple been in London, we can only infer from the general confidence which was reposed in his ability, high character and personal weight; but his distance from the scene of action precluded the possibility of carrying the project into effect, even had he been disposed to accept the position, which may be reasonably doubted. Events pressed impatiently for a solution, and the activity of the hybrid Opposition admitted of no delay. At the very moment when Mr. Astle was hastily writing off to Lord Temple to apprize him that there existed this desire to invite him to undertake the construction of a Cabinet, General Cuninghame was dispatching another letter, to inform him that a new Administration was actually in course of formation, of which he could then give him no further particulars, than that Lord Rawdon was to be called to the Upper House, and Townshend to be created a peer. In the evening of the same day this piece of intelligence takes a more definite and authentic form.

GENERAL CUNINGHAME TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, March 1st, Eight o'clock, P.M.

My Lord,

Lord North is now with the King. The Duke of Portland, or Mr. Fox, will be sent for to-morrow.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,
Your most obedient humble servant,
Robert Cuninghame.

Mr. Fox, however, was not sent for. The King's reluctance to negotiate with him could not be overcome: upon that point His Majesty was inflexible; and interview after interview followed, ending in the same unsatisfactory way, the country continuing to be kept in a state of uncertainty and alarm, and, as Mr. Grenville describes it, "wholly without any Government whatsoever."

GENERAL CUNINGHAME TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, March 4th, 1783.

My Lord,

In these uncertain times, it is difficult to relate events with precision; but I believe there is no doubt of Lord North's having been near three hours last night with the King, and that they parted without agreeing to any Administration. It is said, His Majesty offered to consent to any arrangement that excluded Mr. Fox and his associates, and that Lord North thought it was impossible to make up any Administration, to have the appearance of permanency, without them. What is

to happen next, God alone knows! All is confusion; and the gentlemen of landed property are seriously alarmed.

I have the honour to be, with the most perfect respect,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most faithful and obedient humble servant,

ROBERT CUNINGHAME.

His Excellency the Earl Temple, &c., &c., &c.

GENERAL CUNINGHAME TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, March 5th, 1783.

MY LORD,

I continue to write in these curious times, though I am confident you must have better intelligence from a variety of other authorities. Lord North's interview, last night, with the King did not last above ten minutes. His Majesty again asked him if *they* (meaning Mr. Fox and his associates) would be satisfied with a neutral person being at the head of the Treasury: his Lordship replied, they would only be satisfied with the Duke of Portland. His Majesty then asked Lord North if he would accept of the Treasury, which he declined; and so they parted. This, the Duke of Portland told me himself, last night, at Brookes's. Mr. Fox said something to the same effect; but it was too late before Lord North left the King, to write by last night's post. His Majesty looked very firm; but what course he is to steer is not yet known.

I am happy to find, from all sorts of people who may be supposed to know something of ideal arrangements, that there is no intention anywhere of your Excellency not having the option of remaining in Ireland; and that it is the universal wish you may continue there, for the sake of this as well as of

that country. If you happened to be here now, you would have the Treasury laid at your feet.

I have the honour to be, with perfect respect,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most faithful, obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT CUNINGHAME.

His Excellency the Earl Temple, &c., &c., &c.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Thursday, March 6th, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You will very naturally have expected, long before this, to have heard of the establishment of some new system of Government, upon the ruins of that which is now avowedly broke up in every part of it. Still, however, the country remains, at this urgent and critical moment, wholly without any Government whatsoever.

When all hopes were over of forming an Administration from the remains of Lord Shelburne's, acting under some other head, the King sent, as I imagined he would, for Lord North; having previously had some communication with him through Lord Guilford, whom he saw on Sunday. Lord North has been twice with the King, and has both times been pressed to form some system to the exclusion of the Duke of Portland and Fox, which he has peremptorily refused; alleging the necessity of strength, and the impossibility of supporting Government in Parliament, except on the basis of their coalition. The last time, the conference is said to have ended with his being told, that if *he* was determined, he would find that the person who talked to him could be so likewise. In the meantime, Parliament is kept sitting, and must be so; because Fox declares his resolution not to suffer the Mutiny Bill to pass till a Government is formed.

In this state of things, it is difficult to do any business whatever; because those who hold their situations only for the moment, are of course disinclined to take any step beyond the mere routine of office. I have, however, prevailed upon Townshend to speak to the King about the Peers to be created previous to the ———. I enclose my note to him upon the subject, and his answer.

The Irish Bill stood for yesterday, and as it had been so often put off, I thought it better not to delay it any longer. Accordingly, I moved to go into the Committee. (Neville in the Chair, Lord Nugent peremptorily refusing, and Jemmy not being well.)

Before we went into the Committee, Percival desired to say, that as he understood his idea had not been approved of by the House in general, and that every one seemed to wish that this Bill might pass without any division or difference of opinion, he should not now insist upon it, though he was not convinced that the motion was improper.

Mr. Eden said, that the principle of the Bill met his hearty concurrence; though he wished to observe that the clause about the judicature seemed to him so worded, as to declare that England never had the right of appellant judicature, which was not the case.

Lord Newhaven said, he saw no reason for not inserting the clause, and he should, therefore, move an instruction to the Committee, to receive a clause to prevent any treason, or misprision of treason, committed in Ireland, from being inquired of or tried in Great Britain.

Lord Lucan seconded him.

Lord Nugent objected to this. He said that, originally, when attempts had been made in the House of Commons in favour of Ireland, no man had been a more eager or strenuous supporter of them than himself. But now, ever since he had seen the disposition of this country favourable to Ireland, and

that it was the sincere wish of all Englishmen to adopt the most liberal principles on that subject, he had thought that it became more proper for persons connected with Ireland to remain silent, and to leave the measures in favour of that country to be carried through by Englishmen. In the present instance, he wished that the clause in question had not been proposed, because it was attended with more difficulty than the noble Lord seemed to be aware of. The Act of Henry VIII., which had been referred to, had been adopted and confirmed as an Irish Act by the Parliament of that country. This being the case, the repeal of the English Act could have no effect whatever, because the Irish statute would still remain unrepealed, and could only be removed by the Parliament of Ireland; whilst, on the other hand, we should be to take away a law which had been so much approved by Ireland as to be by them adopted.

Mr. Herbert read the Irish statute alluded to, and said that the disposition towards Ireland which appeared in every part of the House, could not but inspire that country with every sentiment of affection to Great Britain.

I then said, that if the motion made by the noble Lord was persisted in, I should most undoubtedly not oppose it, because it was impossible for me to give opposition to any measure which had even the appearance of adding strength to the exclusive rights of Ireland; that I was of opinion myself that the jurisdiction in question was not, by any means whatever, conveyed by the Act referred to; that the statute of Henry VIII. was not intended to affect any part of the King's dominions was clear to a demonstration, from the subsequent statute of the same King in explanation of it—the preamble of which, referring to the former Act, does expressly speak of treasons committed out of this realm, *and other the King's dominions;* and that the circumstance of the adoption of the former Act by the Irish Parliament was a clear proof that it

was not considered as an Act which could bind Ireland; and I could not help wishing that the noble Lord would withdraw his motion, for the reason stated by the noble Lord (Lord Nugent), that we could not repeal an Irish Act; and that without so doing, the repeal of the English statute (even if it did give any jurisdiction) would be nugatory. Besides this, there was another reason. The framers of this Bill had certainly never supposed that it could go to remove at once every difficulty which might arise, and to settle at once every point which might require to be settled when, as in the present case, a great stream was turned into a new channel. Our idea went to the unequivocal and permanent establishment of those points which were in the contemplation of Government last year, to those things to which Parliament then intended to pledge, and to which I had ever been of opinion they had inviolably pledged the faith of the nation. That by so doing, we conceived we should establish a foundation of confidence, upon which all less important points might be adjusted with mutual temper, harmony and affection; that Ireland could certainly entertain no doubt that the same principles which had guided us in the great and extensive considerations would continue to actuate our conduct in those of less concern and more confined regulation; (that in the present case, if the English Act was a grievance to Ireland, so also would the Irish be to England.)* At the same time, however, I begged that it might be clearly understood that this clause was not objected to on the ground of its being a new claim on the part of Ireland. Ireland had last year, in the Addresses of her Parliament, claimed to be a distinct and independent kingdom. If, therefore, this Act affected her independence—and in that light it was objected to—so far it certainly was not in any respect a new claim. To supreme legislation and supreme judicature, all criminal jurisdiction was certainly annexed and inseparable.

* Query the inserting this, which I omitted in my speech.

Lord Newhaven then withdrew his motion.

Percival said, that the exercise of this jurisdiction had been antecedent to the Act of Henry VIII.

In the Committee, Lord Beauchamp objected to the word established, which he wished to alter to the word recognized; but that, unless it was agreed to, he would not press it.

I said that, as every word of the Bill had undergone the most serious discussion, and the most attentive consideration, on both sides of the water, and that as the present form had been approved of, I wished the Bill might receive no alteration, in order that it might pass, without any possible difference of opinion, in any part of the House.

He then proposed to put for ever instead of for the future; to which I agreed.

To the last clause, to prevent the receiving writs of error, &c., I moved an addition, which was drawn by the Attorney-General in consequence of the enclosed papers from Mr. Travers. I enclose also a letter to him, which I wish you would let Bernard or Cooke copy, and send to him, with a copy of the clause in question.

Upon the whole, the business has gone off better than I expected; though I take it for granted that we shall hear again, both of the criminal judicature and of the *recognition*. Pitt offered to state the objections at large to the latter; but I thought it better not.

Lord Bellamont has written a letter in the newspapers about the criminal judicature, which I suppose you have seen. I saw him in the House, and told him the part I meant to take. He said he wished it had been inserted in the Bill, but hoped at least that I would guard against the idea of its being called a new claim. To this you will see that part of my speech was directed; and for that reason, as well as on account of the miserable statement of it in the papers of to-day, I wish that you would revise and publish it in the Irish newspapers.

After this business was over, Eden wished that Ireland might be inserted in the American Intercourse Bill. I was gone; but the Solicitor-General said that he thought it pretty extraordinary that, on the very day that the House had declared that they had no right to legislate for Ireland, that honourable gentlemen should wish to make trade laws for her.

I hope to be with you now in the course of a week; but wait for your answer to my letters, having heard nothing from you since yours of the 16th of February. Adieu.

Believe me ever,

My dear brother,

Most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

The letter to Mr. Townshend respecting the Irish peerages contained the expression of a desire on the part of Lord Temple to take His Majesty's pleasure on the subject of an increase of the Irish peerage. Before Lord Temple had entered on the Government of Ireland, His Majesty had communicated to him his disinclination to increase the Irish peerage at that time; but as a dissolution of Parliament was now proposed, which would involve in troublesome and expensive contests many gentlemen upon whom it was supposed His Majesty might be inclined to confer that mark of the royal favour, and who had been recommended for it by former Lord-Lieutenants, Lord Temple thought the opportunity favourable for such a creation. Mr. Townshend's answer, conveying the substance of a note he had received from the King in reply, is curiously characteristic of the imperative interest taken by His Majesty in all matters of a personal nature. After expressing His Majesty's

confidence that "Lord Temple will be as sparing as possible in his list of peers," Mr. Townshend adds, "Mr. Pennington must be included in the promotions. If advances are proposed, the Dowager Lady Longford must be a Countess; and if any peer of a junior date to Lord Dartrey is advanced, he must be promoted in the same degree."

Under the circumstances in which Lord Temple was placed by the resignation of Lord Shelburne, and the delays that followed in the settlement of a new Cabinet, Lord Temple resolved to resign his Government of Ireland. Unwillingness to embarrass His Majesty unnecessarily had hitherto restrained him from carrying this resolution formally into effect; but it appears from the following letters that he transmitted his final resolution to his brother, who communicated it to Pitt. The sound judgment of Mr. Grenville is shown with remarkable clearness in his observations on Lord Temple's answer to the Duke of Portland, which was not marked with the decision demanded by the occasion; and his prudence and discretion are equally apparent in the advice he tenders to Lord Temple, upon the necessity of resigning his office into the hands of his successor, instead of throwing it up with an "appearance of fretfulness and intemperance." The contrast between the temperaments of these distinguished men is frequently felt throughout this Correspondence, in the traits of calm, practical wisdom which will be found on the one side, affectionately checking and controlling the tendency to hasty constructions and impatient action that existed on the other.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 6th, 1783.

My dearest Brother,

I have just received your letter of the 1st instant, and need not, I am sure, attempt, what I could not do—the expressing the happiness and exultation of my mind, and the joy which I receive from a determination which, however repugnant it may be to my interests, is perfectly and entirely consonant to every feeling, to every opinion, and to every wish of my heart, public and private. With respect, however, to one part of your letter, I must own to you—and I take the first moment to do it—that after a very serious and deliberate consideration, I should feel great repugnance to the idea of Lincoln's Inn, and that for reasons which I hope soon to detail to you in person; though I will certainly not leave London till something is settled.

Nothing has happened since my letter of this day's date, which you will probably receive with or before this. The general idea is that the King is determined to hold out against the Duke of Portland and Fox. How this can be done, I protest I do not see, except by Pitt's accepting the offer which was made to him. Lord Gower and the Chancellor were the only two people with the King yesterday.

Your letter has confirmed Jemmy in the idea, which was originally his, and not mine, of the disgrace of being transferred with the Standishes, &c., &c. Adieu.

My dearest brother,

Ever most truly and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 12th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Before you receive this, which is intended to go by the post, you will most probably have received a messenger from me with the particulars of the new arrangement which is going on. Lest any delay should arise, I just write by this conveyance to let you know that the King has this day again seen Lord North, and acquainted him that he was content to waive his objection to the Duke of Portland's being at the head of the Treasury, and that he desired that a scheme of a Ministry might be submitted to him on that idea. From him Lord North went to the Duke of Portland; what has been the result I know not.

I am sure you will excuse me if I own to you that I do not quite like your letter to the Duke of Portland, a copy of which I received from you last night. My objection to it is, that it seems to court too much, what I understand it will produce, a second application upon the subject. I subscribe much too heartily to your reasons to imagine, and still less to wish, that this application may be successful; on the contrary, I own I should have desired that room had not been given for it, which I think is rather too much the case. In other respects I like the letter perfectly.

I cannot close this without expressing to you what I feel upon the reception this night of a letter from Bernard, informing me of your goodness to him, and full of gratitude and acknowledgments to you upon the subject; it has most truly relieved my mind from what has been a burthen upon it.

Adieu, my dearest brother

Believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 13th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I have just received yours of the 7th, and am utterly at a loss to imagine what Mornington can have stated to you which has given you apprehensions about the Irish Bill. It has passed the House of Commons without a single dissentient voice in any one stage of it, and I know of no considerable opposition likely to be made to it in the House of Lords, except possibly from the Chancellor or Lord Loughborough.

In all events, I should hope you would very seriously reconsider the two ideas which you throw out. That of a precipitate departure, before the arrival of your successor, would bear so very strongly the appearance of fretfulnesss and intemperance, and would be liable to so many ill consequences in Ireland that might arise, and would all be imputed to you, that I own I should deprecate it in the most eager manner, especially as I should think you would most fully acquit yourself, both to your own character and to the peace of the two kingdoms, by protesting against such a measure, and by declaring your intention of remaining only till you could deliver over the Sword of State to some person authorized to receive it.

With respect to the other, it brings back very strongly to my mind what I felt and still feel on the subject of Eden's conduct last year. I cannot think that we are either of us justifiable in withholding from persons in the King's Government any information upon the situation of Ireland; but that, on the contrary, the best mode of enforcing acquiescence in your wishes as to the Bill, would be by a communication of opinions on the subject. Such a communication must of course be made with prudence and caution, always bearing in mind the

essential difference between committing ourselves to a friend and to a foe. But still, as to facts and leading outlines, I think we have no choice.

As your letter does not imply any wish of a particular secresy on the subject (although it is certainly not a thing to be wantonly proclaimed), I thought it would be a sort of return for confidential communications which I have transmitted to you, and a step liable to no objections, to state your intention to Pitt. Jemmy's opinion agreeing with mine, I took an opportunity in a few words to say that an intimation had been made to you of a wish that you should continue, in case the arrangement under the Duke of Portland should take place, and that you had thought yourself bound to decline it. (I did not think myself at liberty to mention the Duke of Portland's letter specifically, as it is marked *secret*, although the thing itself is well known and talked of.)

His answer was very much the kind of thing I expected, expressing his great satisfaction that your ideas on the subject of the late Opposition and new Government concurred with his, and at the same time his concern and apprehensions on the subject of the effect likely to be produced in Ireland by such an event. I only added, that he would easily see that although it was a thing which must in a few days be publicly known, still it ought not to be talked of beforehand.

I have expressed to you in my letter of last night what I feel upon your goodness to Bernard. To these I am now to add my acknowledgments of your kind wishes in my behalf. I will not pretend to say that I am indifferent on the subject, but I can with the greatest truth and sincerity assure you that I feel much more pleasure and satisfaction in the affection and love towards me which produces those wishes, than I could in the accomplishment of them to their utmost extent. And whilst I continue to possess that affection, I shall look with much less

anxiety to other objects which are in my estimation of so much less value.

In these sentiments believe me, my dearest brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Upon reading this over, I find I have said not a word about a Ministry. Lord North saw the King yesterday, and from him went to the Duke of Portland; but at twelve o'clock to-day I know from authority that the latter had not seen the King, and that no name was fixed for any one department; which is, in a few words, all that I know.

I enclose a letter from Tonson, with my answer.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Friday, March 14th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

We are now not a step forwarder than we were at this time two days ago. The King commissioned Lord North to submit a plan of Government, with the Duke of Portland at the Treasury. This has not been done; nor has the King sent for the Duke of Portland, who expected that step to have been taken.

What transpires about arrangements is as follows; Pitt not to join them (*upon which you may depend*); Lord North to name a colleague to Fox, who is to be Lord Stormont, *if he will accept;* Lord Dartmouth to be of the Cabinet; Twitcher, Privy Seal; G. North, Treasurer of the Navy; Grey Cooper, Jemmy's successor (at which his noble spirit is offended); Lord J. Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Fitzpatrick, talked of for Secretary-at-War; Lord Keppel to return. Query, whether he is by this means to be in the Cabinet with

Twitcher? I think he should appoint St. Hugh a Junior Lord.

So good night to you.

Amicitiæ sempiternæ inimicitiæ placabiles.

These arrangements were dependant on the issue of negotiations that underwent fresh modifications from day to day. In the meantime Lord Temple had sent in his resignation. His Lordship's conduct on this occasion was as creditable to his integrity as it was illustrative of his temperament. He appears to have accompanied the official despatch tendering his resignation with a private letter to the King, which Mr. Grenville, acting on his own discretion, withheld. Lord Temple, devoted to the principles and the party of the late Marquis of Rockingham, and regarding the alliance of the Duke of Portland, Mr. Fox, and others of that party, with Lord North, as a gross dereliction of principle, did not hesitate to allude personally to them in the communication to His Majesty, under the impression that the coalition was then actually formed, and that in his public and onerous position he was bound to state the grounds upon which he felt himself imperatively called upon to resign. The coalition, however, was not yet concluded; although, on the 13th of March, General Cuninghame confidently announced to Lord Temple that a new Administration was to be declared the next day, and that that was the last letter he should have to write to him on such idle subjects; entering circumstantially, at the same time, into the disposal of the various offices, and assigning an equal division of the Cabinet to Fox and Lord North, with the moderate Duke of Portland at the

head. Mr. Grenville, whose caution in reference to such transactions had been disciplined by experience, and who always brought the most temperate judgment to bear upon situations of delicacy and embarrassment, saw the imprudence of committing Lord Temple to expressions that supposed a state of things which did not actually exist, or which, if it should be brought about, would consign his letter to the "very worst hands into which it could fall." Lord Temple, in Dublin, harassed by delays, and surrounded by increasing difficulties in his Government, could not decide this point so clearly as Mr. Grenville in London; and the sequel, which furnished his Lordship with a legitimate opportunity of stating his views and feelings to the King, amply justified the course adopted.

In the following letter, Mr. Grenville details the substance of his interview with the King, arising out of Lord Temple's resignation. It possesses the highest historical value, taken in connection with the letters that follow, for the full and minute information it affords of the course of those secret negotiations which finally terminated in the establishment of the coalition.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 17th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I received your packet of the 12th instant last night, and immediately sent to Lord Sydney your despatch of resignation. He forwarded it to the King, who immediately directed him to send me to Buckingham House, where I was with him above two hours.

I felt myself under much difficulty about your letter. It was evidently written on the supposition of a Government being formed by the Duke of Portland and Fox, in conjunction with Lord North; and to that point its whole reasoning was directed. Now the present situation in which we are, seems to tend to some different solution; and this idea was very much strengthened by the King's note to Lord Sydney, desiring to see me, in order to talk with me about your staying, *at least for the present*. This being the case, I was apprehensive that some parts of your letter might possibly pledge you further to him than you would like in other contingencies which might turn up; and I also thought that a letter of that sort would come with more force from you in answer to what I should undoubtedly be commissioned to say to you. To this was added a most serious apprehension, which had struck both Jemmy and myself very forcibly, as to the prudence of committing yourself to him by so very strong language on the subject of the Duke of Portland and Fitzpatrick by name, and under your handwriting; which paper, even supposing no ill use was ever to be made of it by the person to whom it is addressed, might, in the space possibly even of a few hours, by any sudden accident, fall into *other* hands, perhaps at this moment the very worst into which it could fall.

Under the pressure of these two ideas, and having very little time for deliberation, I adopted that measure which I thought at all events the safest; as, if the delivery of the letter at this moment, and in the altered state of things, was wrong, it could not ever be recalled; while, if you thought me wrong in withholding it, the error could be productive only of a short delay —certainly not wholly immaterial, but I should hope not very important. At the same time I own that I felt much difficulty in withholding it, as it appeared to me so admirably drawn up, and so well calculated to produce the effect intended by it, and so very unexceptionable in all its parts, except that which I

have stated before—the mention of individuals by name (especially those with whom you are living on good terms), in a manner which, however proper for conversation, is, I think, infinitely hazardous when committed to paper.

Still, however, I hope that every effect intended by it may be produced as well, and possibly better, by the letter which you will of course send to him in answer to this conversation. I am sensible that, in using this discretion, I have taken much upon me; but I am sure I need not enlarge upon the motive; and I cannot help flattering myself, that the step itself will meet your approbation, especially as the conjecture from the words of the King's letter was justified in great measure by what passed during so long a conversation, in which, from the inconceivable quickness with which the King ran on upon the different subjects of it, I found it very difficult to put in even the little which I thought it right to say.

When I first came in, he stated, with many very flattering expressions to you, the concern which he had felt at the idea of your resignation; that he had sent to me in order that he might have an opportunity of letting you into all the circumstances of the present situation, which he thought the most calamitous into which any country had ever been brought; that the kingdom was split into parties, not as had been formerly the case—two great bodies of men acting under the different denominations of Whigs and Tories, and upon different principles of conduct—but into factions, which had avowedly no other view than that of forcing themselves, at all hazards, into office; that before you took any step, he wished you to be fully apprized of the circumstances, which he would for that purpose detail to me, as he hoped that your letter had been written in the idea of the Government falling into the hands of persons of the description stated above.

I answered, that I believed you had certainly had that event in view, as one which the circumstances of the time rendered

too probable. He then went into a long detail (with a great number of digressions upon the different political subjects of the day) of what had passed since Monday's vote, particularly between him and Lord North, of whom he spoke in terms of strong resentment and disgust.

He stated, that when Lord Shelburne could no longer remain, he had first endeavoured to persuade Pitt to suffer the Treasury to devolve upon him, and that at one time he had entertained the most flattering hopes of success; but being disappointed in this, he had tried the Cabinet all round, but none had the spirit to stand forth. He had then sent to Lord Lord North (after a week's delay to try other arrangements, particularly one in which the H. C. and the seals of the Secretary of State had been offered to and pressed upon Ths. Pitt), to know whether he was open to negotiation, or prevented by this coalition; that when, in consequence of this message, he saw him, he had at first tried whether he would accept the Treasury; because, much as he disliked them both, if he was to choose, he must certainly prefer Lord North to Fox. When Lord North declined this, he proposed that an arrangement should be made, leaving the Treasury open to some person of neither party, to be named by him afterwards; that Lord North left him with this proposal, but the next day told him that Mr. Fox insisted upon the Treasury for the Duke of Portland. After some time, he consented to this point also, and then desired that Lord North would bring him a written arrangement, that he might be enabled to see the whole, and form his judgment upon all the dismissals and appointments which were intended. After two days more, he had sent for Lord North, who had told him that he had no such arrangement to bring him, for that difficulties had arisen between them; that Fox insisted upon removing the Chancellor, in order that the Seals might be put into commission. To this the King objected very strongly, as he had expressed his desire

that the arrangement might be made upon a broad basis; and that nothing could be more different from such an idea than the dismissal of the Chancellor, without having any person to substitute in his room. Lord North then said that another difficulty had arisen. He had named Lord Stormont for the Secretaryship of State; but this had been objected to; and Lord Stormont had refused to accept of any other situation. The King again asked him whether, this being the case, he would undertake it separately. This was declined.

Yesterday evening, at five, Lord North was again at the Queen's House, when the King told him that he desired it might be understood that it was not he who broke off the arrangement upon the idea of keeping the Lord Chancellor; that, on the contrary, he desired it might be understood that he had expressed no determination, nor would he express any, upon a particular part of the proposed arrangement, till the whole was submitted to him. Therefore, if they thought to obviate the difficulties which they found in making it by laying the onus upon him, he was not fairly dealt with.

This finished the detail. His observations upon it were nearly what is implied in the last sentence: that he believed, when they came to treat about the arrangement, they found infinite difficulty in coming to any agreement, and had therefore resolved to throw the burthen upon him; that, in the meantime, he was using every endeavour to form a Government; that he hoped your resignation was only to be considered as relative to the event which you then thought likely to happen; that undoubtedly *in some cases* it would be impossible for you to stay there with honour to yourself; that unless you met with full support from hence, the Government in Ireland could not go on; but, in the meantime, he desired I would write to you, to express his wish that you would take no precipitate step till something was finally settled.

This, I think, was the main jut of the conversation to this

point; though I have thrown it much more into form than it was spoken—as it was interrupted by a great variety of digressions: upon the coalition, in the reprobating of which I took care to join with him most heartily; upon Fox, whom he loaded with every expression of abhorrence; upon the Duke of Portland, against whom he was little less violent; upon Lord North, to whose conduct he imputed all the disasters of the country; upon American Independence, which seems to have been a most bitter pill indeed; upon associations and reforms, clubs, gaming-houses, aristocratic cabals, &c., &c.; together with much inquiry into the state of Ireland, and the characters and conduct of people there; and a long detail about Lord Bellamont, who he believed was crack-brained, and of whom he told two curious stories of audiences which he had asked, and in which he at last insisted that, unless the King would make him reparation for the second disgrace he had suffered by the nomination of Lord Arran, by suffering him to kiss hands, on or before St. Patrick's Day, for an English Baronage or an Irish Marquisate, given to him, or given to Lord Mountrath and entailed upon him, he would come no more to Court; which curious condition, you may believe, has not been complied with; and consequently, said the King, I shall be delivered from the trouble of seeing him.

You will easily suppose that I have not been able to recollect the precise words of a conversation so very diffuse, upon so many different subjects, and which lasted from eleven at night till past one this morning.

Upon the whole, what I collect from his conversation, and from the sort of impression which the whole tenour of his language, rather than from any one particular expression, is that in the case which you supposed, and upon which you acted, nothing could be more agreeable to him than your resignation; especially, as he observed to me several times, that it was impossible he could wish that such a Government

should last; and mentioned a message which he sent through Lord Ashburton to Lord Shelburne, that he should consider him as a disgraced man if, after their conduct towards him, he ever "*supported them in Government*, or joined them in opposition;" (these were the precise words he used to me.) I collect the same idea also from the expression of *some cases* in which you could not stay, and the eagerness with which he joined in with me when I took occasion to observe to him that the system of the Duke of Portland and Fox in Ireland had been so different from yours, as to put you under an impossibility of remaining under them. This point, therefore, I conceive to be clear, that in such an event, your resignation would be as acceptable to him as I think it would be honourable to yourself.

But from the request he has made you, and from the particular pains he seems to take to throw the onus (as he called it) of breaking off the negotiation with the Duke of Portland and Lord North upon their shoulders, I think we must conclude that he considers that as being entirely at an end, and that he has something else in view; though what that something else can possibly be, I am utterly at a loss to imagine.

At the same time, I think the opportunity of doing a handsome thing is too fair to be neglected. If I were therefore to advise you, it would be to write to the King, stating that nothing could be further from your intention than the throwing any embarrassment in his way at a moment when, on the contrary, you would rather wish to do everything in your power, &c., &c. This would lead naturally to the first part of your letter, about the manner of your having accepted the Government of Ireland. You might then say, that the letter of resignation was written on the idea of the probability of those men being called to His Majesty's counsels who had, &c., &c. That under such a Government you could not have flattered yourself with the hopes of being useful to His

Majesty, for the reasons assigned, &c., &c., which I think it is impossible for you to detail better than they are there stated, except in the single instance of the mentioning of names, with no very flattering comment, which I would (if I might be allowed to do it) deprecate in the strongest manner, for reasons very sufficiently obvious. You might then, I should think, go on to say, that in obedience to His Majesty's gracious dispositions, you would continue to hold your situation till something is settled; in the hopes, however, if it ended in such a Government as you could not serve under consistently with your character, or the system of your Administration, you might then be permitted, &c., &c.

In this manner I should hope that you would lose nothing, except a little time—not very important to you—by the non-delivery of your letter.

The Duke of Portland had a meeting last night, to which were summoned all Fox's people, and all the country gentlemen who had formerly acted with them. The Duke stated to them what had passed, and told them that the whole had broken off upon the King's insisting upon the Chancellor and Lord Stormont. This is pretty curious, at the moment that the King was stating to Lord North that such a reason could not be assigned with truth. The Duke said, however, that Lord North was then with the King, and therefore hoped that nothing might be done till they heard the result. This was applied to Lord Surrey, who had expressed an intention of moving an address.

What passed between the King and Lord North, I have told you above, as it was stated to me. It is not, therefore, wholly impossible that the negotiation may be resumed, as the King's object seems to be to set them quarelling between themselves about the different parts of this arrangement. At all events, I think your letter cannot but do good, and I will certainly remain here to deliver it.

Acting strictly on this sound advice, Lord Temple addressed to His Majesty the following letter, in which he enters at length into the peculiar obstructions to which he had been exposed through the whole period of his Administration in Ireland, and unreservedly submits for His Majesty's consideration the reasons which led to his resignation.

LORD TEMPLE TO THE KING.

Dublin Castle,
March 23rd, 1783, Two o'clock, A.M.

SIRE,

I have this moment received from Mr. Grenville the detail of the conversation, with which your Majesty was pleased to honour him on the 16th instant. I will not attempt to state the feelings of gratitude and respect with which I have received the testimonies of your approbation, and the signal proofs of that condescension, with which you were graciously pleased to inform me of the situation of the kingdom at this most alarming crisis. Every feeling of duty and of inclination call upon me to offer my situation and opinions to your Majesty's consideration; and, as I have no official means of conveying them, I trust to your goodness to excuse what must be a long detail, but truly interesting to me, as your good opinion must ever be the object of my eager wishes.

When your Majesty did me the honour to destine me to this high office, I unaffectedly felt that diffidence, which my inexperience and scale of talents naturally suggested to me. I will not say that I was insensible to the hopes of building my honest fame upon the event of my administration, but I solemnly protest my principal object was to contribute my small share to the support of your Majesty's Government,

abandoned in a situation, from various reasons the most critical, upon grounds which appeared to me upon every principle, public and private, wholly indefensible. To the natural difficulties of my undertaking, I had the additional misfortune of not finding myself peculiarly in those confidential habits with your Majesty's servants, to which, in such a situation, I should naturally look for support. My trust, under God, was in your Majesty's goodness and protection; and I acknowledge, with pride and gratitude, that I have been honoured with the most unequivocal proofs of that goodness.

Judge then, Sire, the pain which I felt in that moment, when I thought myself called upon by every principle of public duty to solicit officially your Majesty's permission to retire from this high station. I have not vanity enough to conceive that my presence in Ireland is material to your service further than as it will be always eligible to preserve, particularly in this kingdom, some settled system of Government. And upon this ground, I hold it my indispensable duty to lay at your Majesty's feet the reasons which induced me to believe that my residence in this kingdom can be no longer useful to that service, to which I will beg your permission to say I have dedicated every hour and every faculty since my arrival. And as those reasons cannot be deposited in the office with safety to the interests of both kingdoms, and as, for many reasons, it might not be judged eligible that they should fall into the hands of every description of gentlemen who aspire to high office, I have ventured upon the unusual measure of depositing them in your royal breast, still trusting to that indulgent goodness, which I have experienced, for my excuse. And if any part of these reasons shall appear to your Majesty to be painted too strongly, I must apologize truly for them, though I solemnly declare that the state of facts which I am about to draw, is the result of cool deliberation; and I will venture to hope that your Majesty will believe that I will

not attempt to mislead your judgment either upon facts, characters, or opinions.

From the first moment of my arrival in Ireland, I have struggled with infinite difficulties. I was told in England, that the situation of this kingdom held out every hope which could be suggested by perfect confidence in English and Irish Government, and by unanimity arising from the spirit of gratitude for the liberal concessions made by England. And I was likewise told, that I should find prepared to my hands such a mass of solid strength, as would effectually secure the means of conducting the ordinary purposes of Government not only with facility, but even with *éclat*. Your Majesty will judge my mortification in finding this kingdom engaged in a ferment on a constitutional question more violent than that which had preceded Lord Carlisle's departure, and that ferment much increased by the injudicious arrangement of a measure, which might have been truly useful if conducted with address—I mean that of the provincial levies—but which, from circumstances infinitely too long for the present detail, totally defeated the only essential object which it ought to have accomplished, the division of the Volunteers. To this spirit of dissatisfaction, arising from these two essential objects, I had not the shadow of Government to oppose. Those who composed it were respectable for their integrity, and had been high in popular estimation; but many circumstances concurred to weaken the advantages which were proposed from their support: the want of knowledge and habits of office, the thirst of popularity which pervaded them all, and the fetters which they had forged for themselves by popular questions during an opposition of fifteen years, by making them timid and undecided, rendered them wholly unfit for the defence of Government. The several characters respectable for their services, their rank, their connections and their influence, had been systematically and ostentatiously depressed, except in the sole

instance of Mr. Ponsonby, whose influence was unbounded, and brought forward that spirit of discontented jealousy, of which your Majesty well remembers instances in the last weeks of the Irish Sessions. The variety of dismissals, some of which were considered as peculiarly cruel, had weakened every confidence in Government, and had spread an apprehension and distrust through every Board and Department. And the natural consequence of this was, that the interior business of the kingdom was much at a stand, while the general expectation was raised, by professions, to a pitch, which it would have been found difficult to gratify in a country where the offices are really insufficient to the purposes of Government. And at the same time, the confidence which had been given to the Volunteers, by the attention paid to them at every meeting, had drawn them into the discussion of every speculative question which could embarrass the public service.

In this situation, my first object was to restore that confidence in the equity of Government, which I judged indispensable for the quieting the alarms of the servants of the Crown. Every attention was paid which could conciliate the feelings of those friends who felt themselves proscribed. At the same time, care was taken not to alarm the very jealous feelings of those to whom the Duke of Portland had trusted the Administration. Your Majesty will recollect, that one of my earliest objects was that of taking the efficient Government from those from whom I expected no permanent assistance, at the moment, when by fighting their ground of the adequacy of the simple repeal, which, from the beginning, I stated as very hazardous, they pledged themselves to the public to a doctrine which was truly unpopular, and has completely ruined them in the opinions of those from whom they derived their consequence. Lastly, I have never lost sight of that first essential object, the depressing the Volunteers by every caution; but with the determined purpose of endeavouring

to restore the sword and executive power to the hands in which the Constitution has so wisely placed them.

Great part of these general opinions appear in my official correspondence: other parts of this system are palpable with the smallest clue, and the whole militates decisively against the opinions of the Duke of Portland and Mr. Fox, whom I particularize, as they continue to keep up a constant correspondence with the popular leaders in this kingdom. Your Majesty will, therefore, judge how perfectly impracticable it is for me to hope to conduct your Government upon the plan which I have stated to be necessary to its existence, and which is in the very teeth of those ideas which have been adopted by the persons whom, from the exigency of public affairs, your Majesty has probably been obliged to call to your counsels.

To these circumstances, Sire, suffer me to add my feelings of indignation at the formation of that coalition to which your Government has given way, formed at such a time, in such a manner, having necessarily for its basis the foul abandonment of every principle, public and private, and holding but one principle in common—and that principle avowed—of forcing themselves into employments at all hazards to the kingdom, which never was exposed to such calamities, and, I fear, never can recover such a shock. I trust, then, that I do not break through the bounds of that respect, which I so truly feel, when I say that no consideration shall make me a friend to such a coalition, or to the component parts of it. These opinions I have not concealed, having (from a very particular circumstance) been forced to explain them.

The whole of these considerations will, I hope, justify me to your Majesty, for a step which I have taken with the utmost reluctance; but which, in conscience and duty, was unavoidable. And I trust that you will not for a moment believe that I could, by such a step, mean to increase those difficulties, which I would relieve with my life; but that my official letter

was written under the idea that the new Administration was formed upon principles and characters which I could not approve. But in all contingencies this Government has suffered so materially from the uncertainty of the last eight weeks, and from the necessary delay of several points which have been submitted, and which I think most essential to Government (so much so, that I have been truly importunate respecting them), that I very much fear the general event, and my own personal credit, from consequences which I foresee, but cannot now wholly prevent. But whatever may be my fears, I will not press this consideration till your Majesty's arrangements shall be made, in the hopes that I may then be allowed to retire, particularly if my confidence and good-will cannot (as is too probable) engage me to the support of the new Ministry.

I need not add, that whenever your Majesty's goodness shall relieve me from the situation, I shall quit it with that regret which is the natural result of leaving a great and essential work of Government incomplete, which I had vanity enough to imagine I might, by your Majesty's goodness, be enabled to restore. And with the same vanity I will add, that I had rather that your Majesty should collect the present state of Ireland from any one than from myself.

Suffer me then, Sire, to hope that my system and my conduct have not been unacceptable to you. Suffer me likewise to hope that your Majesty sees the reasons for this resignation, neither founded in personal motives of indolence, disinclination, or inattention to that service which is so truly flattering to me; nor in others more disgraceful, because they would be more prejudicial to your Government. And suffer me to hope that your Majesty sees me yielding to a necessity which I cannot avert, with a heart filled with the most lively emotions of gratitude, respect, and affection. With these feelings, it is my fervent prayer, that your Majesty's wisdom and firmness may save the kingdom from the calamities which must be the con-

sequences of this unprincipled coalition—unprincipled, because they can be bound to no political or moral principles in common. And with these feelings, I shall retire with satisfaction to that obscurity from which your Majesty's great goodness called me, desirous, however, on all occasions to sacrifice every private feeling, which would naturally lead me to indolence and retirement, whenever your Majesty shall call upon me to give you that assistance which every honest man owes to rescue the Government from a system, which will either be disgraceful and dangerous if it comprehends the whole of this faction, or weak and inefficient if it is partial.

Once more, Sire, I entreat your Majesty's pardon for this long detail; in which, however, many very important considerations, which have been suggested by the present situation of Ireland, are necessarily omitted. My reasons for wishing to quit Ireland have been necessarily secret; and possibly your Majesty will not think it for your service that they should be avowed. To your wisdom, and to your justice I submit them; and must once more urge to your Majesty those sentiments of gratitude, affection, and respect, with which it is my pride to subscribe myself,

Sire,

Your Majesty's very faithful and devoted subject and servant,

N. T.

To this very able and lucid statement His Majesty returned an answer under his own hand; but it is desirable, before we lay that remarkable document before the reader, to trace, through the intervening correspondence, the "lets and hindrances" which in the interim marked the progress of the struggle between His Majesty and the high contracting parties on the other side.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Saturday Night, March 18th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I have just heard that all is off. The King has insisted that the Chancellor should continue, and that Lord Stormont should be Secretary of State, which has been refused on the part of the Duke of Portland and Lord North; and upon this the whole has broke off.

I give you this only as the report of the day; but I believe the negotiation is certainly off. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

I write short, as being almost too late for the post.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 20th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I have this moment heard from indisputable authority, that the following curious scene has passed. The King saw the Duke of Portland yesterday, and ordered him to bring him an arrangement. In consequence of this, a consultation was held between the heads of the new allies. It was agreed that Fox and Lord North should be the two secretaries, the latter going to the House of Lords. It was also agreed that Lord Stormont should be President, but with a stipulation on the part of Fox that he should not be of the Cabinet. To this Lord North demurred; and upon consulting Lord Stormont, the latter peremptorily refused, telling him that he had explained it differently to him. This Lord North could not deny, but offered Lord Stormont his own terms, if he would agree to anything short of Cabinet. The refusal was persisted in, and Lord

North returned to his allies, who were equally peremptory on their part, and so ended the whole negotiation, Lord North refusing to treat any further. The Duke of Portland went to the King and informed him of this, but offered to undertake it separately. The King's answer was, that such an arrangement would be liable to all the objections of weakness, &c., as it would only include one party out of three.

And so ended the treaty of coalition and partition! Coke, of Norfolk, gave notice two days ago, that if nothing was settled by to-morrow he would move an Address. Of course, this will have to be done. My opinion is, that a second offer will be made to Pitt, and that he will accept. I will write again to-morrow if there is anything worth writing. Adieu.

My dearest brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 21st, 1783.

My dear Brother,

If you had not some little confidence in my veracity, you would hardly think it possible that I was not imposing upon you when you read my last letter, written at eleven last night, to assure you that everything was quite afloat, and that the *virtuous* band of men, in whom the country places all her hopes and all her confidence, had made a *patriotic* stand against Lord Stormont's being of the Cabinet; and when you read this, written only thirteen hours later, to inform you that, within the half-hour, everything is settled between the high contracting parties for the following Cabinet:

Duke of Portland . .	*Treasury.*
Fox	*Secretaries.*
Lord North	

Lord Stormont . . .	*President*, and of the Cabinet.
Lord John Cavendish .	*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*
Lord Keppel	*Admiralty.*
Lord Carlisle	*Privy Seal.*

All the efficient responsible offices having thus been required, and insisted upon to be given to persons who are looked upon to be Whigs; and it having thus been made a *sine quâ non* condition, that all the powers of Government should be *solely vested* in those who have the advantage of being denominated the friends of the late Lord Rockingham, and this *determination* having been adhered to, I hope no misrepresentation will be made to you of the basis or purport of the late junction, to which it might perhaps be liable from any *false* accounts.

Seriously, however, you may depend upon this list having been carried by the Duke of Portland to the King for his approbation. What the answer has been, I know not; but hope it will be acquiesced in, though I think it not quite certain, because you observe that no mention is made in it of the Lord Chancellor, and that consequently the dismissal of Thurlow, and the putting the Seals in commission, are implied.

We shall, however, probably soon know; and when I do, I will send off this, but not before, lest the weathercock should veer once more from the North.

I am going down to the House, and am to dine with Pitt. If I send this letter, adding nothing to it, you may depend upon it that the arrangement is agreed to.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

Six o'clock.

I send this by the post, as nothing further is known. Coke postponed his motion till Monday; and W. Hill gave notice of

an amendment to it in the words of Lord Surrey's intended motion last year.

Fox's friends have been holding out for these last four or five days, as a great mark of sincerity, the *determination* not to act with the Chancellor or Lord Stormont. You see how the last has ended; and as to the first, *nous verrons*.

I should be much obliged to you, if, as soon as your resignation is made known in Ireland, you would speak immediately to Fremantle, to desire him to make an economical reform in my household, leaving only such servants as are absolutely necessary for me. I hope to be over with you soon after the receipt and delivery of your letter.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, Saturday, March 22nd, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Next Monday will make exactly five weeks from the first division, during which we have been without any Government in the country; yet I think it very probable that nothing will be settled by that day. The Duke of Portland saw the King yesterday, to carry him the profligate list which I sent you last night. Very contrary to his expectations, though I own not to mine, he did not find that ready acquiescence which he expected, but met with a very cool reception, and was told that the King would consider it. I do not understand that anything has passed to-day, and I cannot help thinking that the King means that nothing should be fixed by Monday, in order that Coke's motion may come on, and the coalition be abandoned to all that resentment which has been raised by an arrangement directly in the teeth of professions and promises not a week old. Yet these are the men who accuse Lord Shelburne of duplicity, without having produced one instance during a six months' Ministry. Think what a situation you would have

been in, if you had been induced by the assurances in a certain letter, to have given a favourable answer to the Volunteers, pledging yourself to stay, and had then received a notification of such an arrangement. I still believe that the King will press it upon Pitt. On the turn which things have taken, I own I wish that he would make up his mind for a short time—and the time need be very short indeed—to the arrangement which is proposed to him; but as it is, he certainly has gained a great point in receiving from the Duke of Portland's hands a proposal to make Lord North Secretary of State. I suppose he is to be Foreign Secretary, to conclude the definitive treaty. Do you remember Fox's proposal, when in opposition, to negotiate the peace for Lord North, because he knew that no foreign State would trust those who had, &c., &c. Adieu.

My dear brother,

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 24th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Since I wrote last, things have again taken a different turn; though I am not sufficiently informed of the particulars of what has passed to say any more than that the King has insisted upon seeing the list of inferior arrangements, which having been declined (obviously from a want of agreement upon the subject), the King wrote a note to the Duke of Portland, which was very decently handed about at Brookes's last night, to say that he would trouble him no further on the subject.

To-day the prevalent report during the whole morning, was, that Pitt had accepted; but when Coke put the question to Pitt in the House of Commons, previous to making his motion,

the latter said that he knew of no Administration being formed.

Coke then made his motion, which I enclose to you, as nearly as I can recollect it. Very little opposition was made to it, and it passed without a division, though not without a good deal of conversation on the part of Fox, Lord North, and Pitt. Nothing, however, material passed beyond the old ground of coalition and non-coalition. Pitt's speech was inimitable. McDonald made a speech which was not very pleasant, supposing that Pitt should join the Gowers, as it turned entirely upon an avowal of all his old principles, which he charged Lord North with having abandoned, &c., &c.

I am utterly at a loss as to forming any conjecture, but my wishes are very strong that the King would suffer the new allies to make their arrangements, and try their strength. Adieu.

My dear brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

T. Pitt's daughter is either dying or actually dead, which prevented his attendance. I pity them exceedingly, for no people dote more on their children.

MR. COKE'S MOTION TO ADDRESS HIS MAJESTY.

"That His Majesty will be graciously pleased to take into his serious consideration the distracted state of his kingdom after a long and exhausting war, and will condescend to comply with the wishes of this House, by forming a Government which may be entitled to the confidence of the House, and may have a tendency to put an end to the unhappy divisions of the country."

Two days after the date of this letter, Lord Shelburne, who still nominally held the Seals, formally resigned. The

scene at the levée on this occasion, which may be described as *le commencement de la fin*, was not only curious in itself, but helped greatly to increase the perplexity in which these strange transactions plunged even those persons who had the best opportunity of observing them. "I am just come from the levée," says General Cuninghame, writing on the 26th of March: "the Duke of Portland was there, and scarcely spoke to. Lord Shelburne, Mr. Pitt, Lord Howe, and the rest of the Ministers present, were loaded with attention. After the levée, Lord Shelburne resigned in ample form. It is universally understood Mr. Pitt will not undertake. These circumstances put together, puzzle the world more than ever." It was a spectacle in perfect harmony with the unparalleled oscillations of the preceding six weeks to see the retiring Ministers overwhelmed by royal condescension, and the heads of the incoming Administration (for in the extremity to which His Majesty was now reduced there was literally no choice) treated with undisguised aversion.

On the 26th, Mr. Grenville saw the King, and placed in His Majesty's hands the letter Lord Temple had written on his suggestion. There is not a cranny of the negotiations—which still hung, and which now appeared even farther from a conclusion than at the beginning—left unexplored in this luminous Correspondence. It is quite evident that the King resisted the coalition to the utmost extremity, that he tried every available individual, and some even who were not in a position to bring any strength to the Government, before he submitted, and that in the end

he submitted only under the compulsion of an overruling necessity.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March, 27th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I received your letter on Tuesday night so late, that I was not able to take any steps towards delivering its enclosure till yesterday, when Lord Sydney acquainted the King, at my request, with my wish to see him. I went there in the evening. Lord Ashburton was there before me, and had an audience of near two hours. When I went in, I said that you had been highly flattered with his gracious communication, and had been encouraged by it to trouble His Majesty with a detail of your situation, and the circumstances in which you stood. He received it very graciously, saying, that he was infinitely obliged to you for it; that he would take the first moment to look it over, and would certainly answer it, which should pass through my hands, as he had never been more satisfied, &c., &c.

He then entered into a detail of what had passed since I saw him last. This, however, differs so very little, if at all, from what I have before stated to you about the Cabinet which was proposed, and the subordinate arrangement which was refused, and upon which the whole negotiation broke off, and has never since been resumed, that I will not trouble you with it over again. One thing, however, is worth mentioning, of which I was not before apprized, that the King complained of personal incivility from the Duke of Portland.

Since the negotiation with the coalition broke off, the Government has been repeatedly and most eagerly pressed upon Pitt, who has, however, yesterday, once more firmly declined it. What the present intention is, I have scarcely a guess. The

King seems as much disinclined as ever to open the negotiation again, and yet I see no resource which he has. He complained much that no one would step forth, and asked me whether I thought Tom Pitt could be worked upon. To this I gave little answer, except my ignorance, &c.; but I believed I might have answered decisively in the negative, as he declined even with William Pitt.

He then entered into a conversation on the subject of Ireland, stating your universal popularity there, and inquiring about different people, particularly Scott. This brought us to the precipitate appointment of the Duke of Portland, and to the insult which had been offered by it to Lord Carlisle, and his astonishment that immediately afterwards he could accept such an office under him.

He mentioned Lord Ely's having applied to be invested in England, and his having desired Lord Sydney to refer the letter to you.

I do not recollect that anything else material passed, except compliments, &c., &c.

I cannot help mentioning to you that you have never written to Lord Sydney, either on his peerage, or your resignation, and that I cannot help thinking that he feels it.

The Irish Bill sleeps in the House of Lords. The Chancellor desired to put it off till something was settled. Lord Abingdon has given notice, in a most ridiculous speech, of his intention to oppose it. I spoke to Townshend yesterday about it, and he promised to appoint some day to-morrow for its being read a second time. They talk here of the Duke of Devonshire for Ireland. He is a respectable man, undoubtedly, and if you except the scale of his talents, which I think inferior to the situation, I know only one objection to the appointment, and that is a capital one.

Pray communicate a little with Mornington about your resignation, &c. It will flatter him; and he is beyond measure

disposed to you both in Ireland and *here*, to which he looks in a short time; but you must not let him know I have told you that.

Adieu, my dearest brother,

Believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

T. Pitt's child is recovering very fast.

The allusion to Lord Mornington (afterwards Marquis Wellesley) is not quite clear. We are left in some doubt as to whether his Lordship looked at this time to office in England, or to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. His ambition and his genius, however, had ample scope subsequently in India and in Ireland, the Government of which latter country was twice confided to him.

In the next letter Mr. Grenville reports another interview with the King, in which His Majesty expressed his regret at the absence of Lord Temple, to whom, even at the cost of still further delay, and some risk of confusion in Irish affairs, he would still have applied, but for the impediments which the distracted and unnatural state of parties threw in the way of the formation of an honest and independent Administration. Mr. Grenville saw that the attempt to form a Cabinet in the face of such adverse circumstances would be attended with no credit to Lord Temple, or permanent advantage to the King, and judiciously discouraged it. He appears all throughout, from the dawn of the alliance between Fox and Lord North, to have desired that they should be allowed to make the experiment, in which he was confident they would fail.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, March 28th, 1783.
Half-past Seven, P.M.

My dear Brother,

I am just returned from the Queen's House, where the King sent for me about two hours ago. When I came into the room, he began the conversation by saying, that although his time was so much occupied in the present hour, he had wished to see me, in order to express how much he had felt upon reading your letter to him; that he had never been more pleased than he had been by that; so much matter in so little space—the whole state of our present situation so justly seen, and so accurately described—in short, he was at a loss to say which appeared to him in the strongest light, the affection which had dictated that letter, or the ability with which it was drawn up.

He expatiated a good deal more on this, and then went on to say, that he was fully convinced that your not having been here at this moment was a very unfortunate circumstance, for that you would have stood forth to assist him. I said I was certain that nothing would have made you so happy as the possibility of being of any service to His Majesty in the present crisis. He answered that he fully believed it, and that the idea had occurred to him this morning of sending for me, to know what I thought of it in the present moment, as there was not time for a communication with you. I told him that there was one very considerable difficulty which struck me upon it—"the distance—besides that, Sire, the finding any person for the House of Commons, where it is most likely that the great push will be made."

This seemed to strike him. He mentioned his having sent yesterday again to Tom Pitt, to endeavour to persuade him to stand forward, and his having declined it. He then went a good deal into T. Pitt's character, speaking very highly of his good sense and integrity, but expressing his doubts whether

his health would ever allow him to take any active part; that, however, he had received this satisfaction from his conversation with him, that he had the pleasure of seeing that he approved of the conduct which he had held. He mentioned his having shown him the material letters which had passed, and then took them out of a drawer, and gave them me to read, consisting of four. One from the Duke of Portland, desiring to see the King. The King's note to Lord North, desiring to see the arrangement; and Lord North's answer, enclosing a letter to him from the Duke of Portland, both declining to give in the list.

While I was reading these letters he went over with me a great variety of topics, chiefly the same as in the two former conversations, and very particularly upon the characters of Lord North and Fox, whom I think he described very justly, though certainly not in the most flattering colours. The first, he said, was a man composed entirely of negative qualities, and actuated, in every instance, by a desire of present ease at the risk of any future difficulty. This he instanced in the American war, and in the riots of 1780, of which he gave me a very long detail. As to Fox, he allowed that he was a man of parts, quickness, and great eloquence; but that he wanted application, and consequently the fundamental knowledge necessary for business, and above all, was totally destitute of discretion and sound judgment. He paid many compliments to William Pitt, to Jemmy, to the Major-General, to myself, and above all, to you, which language, I know, he has within these few days held most universally, which has probably given rise to the second report of your being sent for.

In more than one instance, he made use of expressions which, if they did not absolutely declare his resolution at all hazards not to send again for the Duke of Portland, at least, have very strongly impressed me with that idea. In this I may be mistaken, but I own I so understood him; although I am utterly at a loss to form any conjecture of what he is looking forward to.

After he had gone through a very long detail of this sort, he dismissed me, saying, that he would certainly write to you, through me, in a day or two; and, in the meantime, desiring that you would understand how much he had been satisfied with you, and how happy he should have been if you could have helped him.

You see this does not amount to an offer; and the reason is, I think, sufficiently plain why the offer was not made: namely, that he had been staggered at what, I fear, is an insurmountable difficulty, with respect to the lead of the House of Commons. W. Pitt would certainly not hear of it, after his second peremptory refusal of the Treasury; T. Pitt as certainly not, after his refusal, for the second time, together with the comment afforded by a very long conversation which I had with him yesterday morning upon the subject; Jemmy has not health, and still less spirits, for so very arduous an undertaking; and as for myself, even if equal in other respects, which I very unaffectedly know I am not, still I am much too young, and too little versed in the navigation of that tempestuous sea, to venture out in such a hurricane as this. Indeed, upon the whole, I think the King seemed more to wish that you should know he had entertained, and been inclined to the idea, than to desire to press it upon you, at a moment when it appears so very impracticable.

I said nothing in my last letter upon the subject which you mentioned to me respecting yourself, as I had no opportunity of dropping any hint of it to the King, when I saw him to deliver your letter. To-night, I certainly had that opportunity, and would as certainly have made use of it, but that I was never certain, till the last moment of the conversation, whether it would have ended by desiring me to state the offer to you as one now actually made, or as one wished to have been so if circumstances had allowed it. If it had been the former, a much better field would have been opened for the application:

as it is, I will certainly throw out the idea, if I can find any opportunity of doing it when he delivers me his answer to you.

I shall be impatient to hear your observations upon this interesting conversation. I certainly did not mean to take upon me to answer on your behalf in the negative, nor do I think I was so understood; but the objection which I started, in order that I might learn if any solution could be found, appeared to him, having no such solution to offer, as it does to me, seeing none such which can be offered, totally and absolutely insurmountable.

In the meantime, the idea of his resolution not to give way, has most seriously alarmed me. I wish I may prove a false prophet, but I solemnly protest to God that I am afraid of the most fatal consequences. In a week's time, there will not be in the Treasury a farthing of money to defray the ordinary and current expenses of the Government! Judge how this will operate upon the seamen and soldiers, who are daily expecting to be paid off, and who, God knows, do not seem to want so strong an inducement to mutiny as must be afforded them by the total want of money. The licentiousness of the people, already arrived at a pitch never known in this country, is daily inflamed by newspapers and pamphlets, while there is no Government whatever to restrain its effects. These considerations hold out little encouragement to any man; but they afford an inducement to every good citizen to risk much, not only of personal ease and personal safety, but also of personal situation and character, in the hopes of averting the calamities which seem to threaten us. But if the attempt should be unsuccessful (and who shall say it will be otherwise?), it would plunge the Government into greater difficulties, by cutting off from the King his only resource and refuge.

Two or three days must, by their events, and by the King's letter to you, enable you to judge decisively upon the situation of the country, present and to come. The prospect is

truly gloomy, and the combination of calamitous circumstances such as to leave very little reason in my apprehension to hope that this situation will be such as we must all wish—that of a settled Government, even in hands which we dislike, if it can be settled in no other. In the meantime, I do not think you called upon to transmit to the King any answer to this conversation; especially as, I suppose, you must naturally send one to his letter, whenever it arrives.

Adieu, my dearest brother,

Believe me ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

P.S.—The Treasury have written to Hamilton to give assurances of the repayment of the money advanced to Lord Rawdon's regiment, and to desire a state of that money. The natural way would have been, to have given you credit for the whole money due from them to the regiment; but as it is, I hope you will not any longer think it necessary to stop the subsistence, as it has so harsh an appearance.

Having traced the history of the coalition up to this point, we now come to His Majesty's answer to Lord Temple, referring to these transactions. It was transmitted in the following letter from Mr. Grenville.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, April 1st, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I have this evening seen the King, and received from him, with every expression both towards you and myself, the enclosed letter to transmit to you. I take it for granted that it will sufficiently inform you of the determination which he has at length taken, but not avowed, of acquiescing in the Duke of Portland's Cabinet for the present; and of his wishes, that those who act with us should hold themselves apart from such a

Government, in order that he may have something else to look to whenever circumstances shall allow of it.

At all events, if there is anything in his conversation with me which is not implied in his letter, I shall so soon have an opportunity of detailing it to you at length, that I do not think it worth while to trouble you with what must for the most part be a repetition of what he has written to you. Our ground I think clear—honourable to ourselves, consistent with our principles and professions, and holding out to us the fairest prospects of honest ambition. If those prospects fail us, we shall have nothing to reproach ourselves with; if they succeed, we shall stand firmly and honourably upon the ruins of weakness and disgrace.

The King talks of their kissing hands in two or three days. I shall wait till their inferior arrangements are settled, because the difficulty about the peerages still remains. They are said to be pledged by absolute promises; on the other hand, the King neither can, will, nor I think ought, to give way on that head. Should they be so weak as to resign on that ground, their support would certainly fail them, and the road would be opened for us. As soon as this point is understood to be settled, I will go back to you; as, notwithstanding our voluminous correspondence, I wait with the utmost impatience for the moment when I may state to you in person much which I have necessarily left unsaid, and, above all, the sincere and heartfelt affection with which I am

Ever most truly yours,

W. W. G.

You will observe that part of the King's ground is a resistance to *advancements* as well as *creations*. This seemed naturally to throw so much difficulty upon your object, that I thought there would be an indelicacy in pressing it at the time that you are lamenting the unavoidable difficulties under

which he already labours. The delay, I firmly believe, will be very short indeed.

While I am making up this, I receive yours of the 28th of March. It is supposed that the King, when he wrote the note negativing the coalition, either depended on Pitt, or meant by that means to force him. I have, as far as possible, observed towards Pitt the line you state, and I think with success.

I have heard nothing till this moment of the pretty negotiation of which you speak; but do not suppose any man, or set of men, would authorize the sale of a judicial office.

Here follows the letter from the King, enclosed in the above. The historical interest of this confidential communication cannot be overrated.

THE KING TO LORD TEMPLE.

Queen's House, April 1st, 1783.

My Lord,

I had the pleasure, on the 26th of last month, to receive from your truly amiable and right-headed brother and secretary, your very able letter of the 23rd on the state of Ireland, couched in terms that also conveyed the warmest attachment to my person and Government, which makes me not deem among the least of public misfortunes, that the want of resolution in some, and of public zeal in others, will oblige you to quit a station which you fill so much to the satisfaction of all honest men as well as to mine.

Since the conversation I had with Mr. William Grenville on the 16th of last month, I have continued every possible means of forming an Administration; an experience of now above twenty-two years convinces me that it is impossible to erect a stable one within the narrow bounds of any faction, for none deserve the appellation of party; and that in an age when disobedience to law and authority is as prevalent as a thirst after changes in the best of all political Constitutions, it requires temper and

sagacity to stem these evils, which can alone be expected from a collection of the best and most calm heads and hearts the kingdom possesses.

Judge, therefore, of the uneasiness of my mind, at having been thwarted in every attempt to keep the administration of public affairs out of the hands of the most unprincipled coalition the annals of this or any other nation can equal. I have withstood it till not a single man is willing to come to my assistance, and till the House of Commons has taken every step, but insisting on this faction being by name elected Ministers.

To end a conflict which stops every wheel of Government, and which would affect public credit if it continued much longer, I intend this night to acquaint that *grateful* Lord North, that the seven Cabinet Counsellors the coalition has named shall kiss hands to-morrow, and then form their arrangements, as the former negotiation they did not condescend to open to many of their intentions.*

A Ministry which I have avowedly attempted to avoid, by calling on every other description of men, cannot be supposed to have either my favour or confidence; and as such, I shall most certainly refuse any honours they may ask for. I trust the eyes of the nation will soon be opened, as my sorrow may prove fatal to my health if I remain long in this thraldom. I trust you will be steady in your attachment to me, and ready to join other honest men in watching the conduct of this unnatural combination, and I hope many months will not elapse before the Grenvilles, the Pitts, and other men of abilities and character will relieve me from a situation that nothing could have compelled me to submit to, but the supposition that no other means remained of preventing the public finances from being materially affected.

* This passage is printed accurately from the original. Its obscurity may be removed by a slight alteration: "as *in* the former negotiation the*y* did not condescend to open *too* many of their intentions."

It shall be one of my first cares to acquaint these men that you decline remaining in Ireland.

GEORGE R.

A Ministry forced in this way upon a Sovereign who, during the twenty-two years referred to in the above letter, had struggled successfully to resist the dictation of Parliament, and to break down the ascendancy of powerful families and party combinations, contained within itself the seeds of early dissolution. The King accepted them, but never gave them his confidence. He resolved from the first to treat them as men who had violently broken into the Cabinet; and he called upon his friends to withhold their support from them, and to sustain him in his resistance to their policy. The ingratitude of Lord North touched him deeply; and in proportion as he shrank from all personal intercourse that could be avoided with the new allies of his former favourite, he turned for succour to men like Lord Temple, who preserved their honour unsullied, however their political views, on some subjects, might have differed from his own. If it cannot be said of His Majesty in this crisis, that "royalty conspired to remove" these Ministers, the language of His Majesty's letter (in itself an excellent specimen of his pure English style and practical good sense) plainly and unreservedly declares his resolution to get rid of them as soon as possible by all the means the Constitution placed in his hands. Lord Temple's answer frankly indicates the course he was prepared to take during the existence of what the writer designates as the "unprincipled coalition." It will be seen in the sequel how fully he justified the confidence reposed in him by the King.

LORD TEMPLE TO THE KING.

Dublin Castle,
April 6th, 1783, Thirty minutes past Eleven, P.M.

SIRE,

This moment has brought to me your Majesty's letter. Every anxiety which I felt, and which my letter so faintly expressed, is relieved by that condescension with which your Majesty has deigned to accept the state of Ireland, and of my situation. Permit me to express my thanks, with every assurance of that attachment which has your Majesty's service as my only object, and of that heartfelt concern which presses upon me at the detail of the situation of your Majesty's health and feelings, as well as of the kingdom. May Providence long secure to us that health and life; a resource upon which our all depends. To yourself, Sire, and to posterity, you stand acquitted for every consequence, which nothing but the frenzy of the moment could have forced upon you. The interval is truly painful, but a short time must rescue your Government from the fetters thrown round it. My respectful, and (suffer me to say) cordial attachment to your person, and to that best of political Constitutions which is hourly threatened, will ever lead me to sacrifice every private feeling to your service. I must, however, say, and say truly, that every feeling of ambition is deadened by these times and circumstances; and that a public situation has none of those charms for me which have brought forward this unprincipled coalition. But I have, and ever must retain those feelings of duty and affection which will urge me to obey your Majesty's commands in exerting every faculty for your satisfaction and the public service. The scene before you is indeed unparalleled in the annals of history. May those who, by timidity and weakness for some years past, have driven your kingdoms to the verge of destruction, and those, who, by a dangerous and unprincipled attack upon every

part of the Constitution, are now enabled to avail themselves of our distress, deeply answer it. My opinions (uninteresting as they are to your Majesty) have never varied upon that great jewel of constitutional supremacy over all the parts of the empire, now torn from your Crown; nor upon the system of our Government founded on law and practice of ages, which draws the line between the Constitution of Great Britain and all other establishments. These principles, from my earliest infancy, I have imbibed; and if I could reconcile a deviation from them to my political or moral duties, I will confess that no hopes of ambition have power to tempt me. Under these impressions I embarked in an undertaking under which nothing but your Majesty's protection, and a confidence in my own intentions, could have supported me. And with these impressions I retire, with every feeling amply gratified by your favour and approbation.

May no circumstances delay the hour of your Majesty's deliverance from that thraldom which bears so heavily upon you, and may you find in those cool heads and hearts, to whom your Majesty would entrust your service, that resource to which you are so well entitled. In such an arrangement, no consideration will direct your Majesty's thoughts for one moment towards me, except the conviction (which I will beg to urge to your Majesty, and which it will be my pride to cultivate,) of the gratitude, duty, and affection, with which I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Sire,

Your Majesty's very faithful and devoted subject and servant,

N. T.

Lord Temple had decided upon his resignation early in March; and one of the first persons to whom he confided his determination, was his friend Lord Bulkeley. The

letter conveying this intelligence is so honourable to his character, and contains so intimate a revelation of the high principles and paramount sense of duty by which his conduct was governed, that it will inspire even a deeper interest than the more elaborate statement of his motives and opinions which he laid before the King.

LORD TEMPLE TO LORD BULKELEY.

Dublin Castle, March 20th, 1789.

The strange scene, my dearest Bulkeley, of the last month, has left me little time (even if my public duty would have allowed me) to have communicated with you upon the subject of your last letter, and of my present or future situation. The constant intelligence which I have had from England, has enabled me to form a very adequate judgment upon the state of your politics, the complexion of them altered every moment; and I have been obliged to preserve a most cautious and scrupulous silence upon the variety of subjects which the last anxious month has presented. My line has been for several days past decisively taken; but I have not till this day thought myself at liberty to avow to any one that I have requested from the King that he will release me from a situation in which I can no longer be useful; for no consideration shall tempt me to hold this Government, where I do not see my way in the English Cabinet, whose formation must ever revolt and disgust me. I have much to say upon this point, more than I can include in a letter, which from my want of time must be short; but my brother William, who will deliver you this letter open, will tell you in detail what I feel upon the subject. I do not say that I am indifferent to what I sacrifice; Ireland holds out a career the most brilliant to my honest fame; but there

are feelings which I would not exchange in the present moment for all that the two kingdoms could bestow: to those feelings, whenever you are in public office, I recommend you; and trust me that they will amply repay you for any change which a resignation may make in your situation. To those scenes of domestic happiness which have hitherto blessed me, I shall with pleasure return; and in those scenes I shall look for your friendship with the same warm feelings with which I first embraced it; for in all situations I shall, and must, be to you the same George Grenville, and no longer to any one

SANCHO PANÇA, the Governor.

Mr. Townshend, who had filled the office of Secretary of State for the Home Department under Lord Shelburne, and had been just elevated to the peerage (March 6th, 1783) as Baron Sydney of Chiselhurst, was the only member of the Administration who had cordially concurred with Mr. Grenville in his efforts to forward the unfortunate Irish Bill in which Lord Temple was so deeply interested. Previously to his retirement from office, Lord Temple, reminded of his neglect by Mr. Grenville in not having earlier forwarded his congratulations, addressed the following letter to Lord Sydney. A closer acquaintance afterwards sprang up between them, and was ripened into an intimate friendship before the close of the year. "I cannot conclude," observes Lord Sydney, at the close of a letter dated October 27th, 1783, "without expressing, in the strongest manner, how sensible my family, as well as myself, are of the civilities we received at Stowe during the agreeable time which we spent there. We drink your health every day, and desire, *en corps*, to be remembered to your Lordship and Lady

Temple, and to the rest of the party at Stowe, in the kindest manner."

LORD TEMPLE TO LORD SYDNEY.

Dublin Castle, April 2nd, 1783.

My dear Lord,

I have been waiting for some days (now almost weeks) for my delivery; but finding the situation of Government so uncertain, I will not delay to the period when our correspondence would naturally have closed, my cordial acknowledgments for the very steady, honourable, and let me call it affectionate support which you have given me in the complicated scene of the four winter months, and in the whole detail of our communications. I shall ever think of it with gratitude; but if I were vain enough to think my presence in Ireland necessary, you have effectually prevented my continuance by a candour and sincerity, which I could little expect in your successor. Upon these grounds of goodwill to those with whom I acted, and of detestation of that coalition to which you have given way, I have, without communication with any one, sent to you my letter of resignation. I am not insensible to the sacrifice; for arduous as the station most truly is, I had hopes at this early period of my life to have built my honest fame upon the event of my Administration. Those prospects are vanished, but I have that satisfaction in reflecting upon the scene of these last six months, which amply contents me. As to future events, let those who have played this desperate game, deeply answer it; and upon that subject (as far as it relates to this kingdom) I will say nothing, as you will, from my despatches, have collected all that can occur to me. God knows whether this may still find you Secretary; if it should,

I wish you to write to me an ostensible letter, in the strongest terms, upon the conduct of the Portuguese, with respect to our trade at Lisbon. If you had all remained in office I should have seriously proposed reprisals on their effects in our ports, as the only means to bring them to a sense of what is due to Ireland; as it is, I wish for many reasons to leave to Ireland a proof of the pains which you know I have taken upon that subject.

Adieu, my dear Townshend; excuse the name, it has dropped from my pen, and reminds me that I have not assured you of the cordial interest I take in your creation; but till I am more familiarized to Sydney, the former name more easily recalls those feelings of regard, with which I am ever,

Your very faithful and affectionate servant,

(Signed) NUGENT TEMPLE.

Many thanks for your exertions on Lord Rawdon's business: it has been shamefully delayed, and I thought the stoppage of subsistence the likely means to bring it forward; but you will easily believe that I have taken care, though it is nominally stopped, yet that the men are paid.

Rt. Hon. Lord Sydney.

By this time the arrangements were completed, and the new Ministers had kissed hands.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, April 2nd, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I enclose a paper containing the new arrangement, who kissed hands to-day. The King sent last night to Lord North, to

bid him tell them that they were to come to the levée to-day to kiss hands.

You will, as I understand, have the supreme felicity of receiving from the Right Honourable Frederick Lord North, a notification of his appointment; though I hear to-day that Fox is to take Ireland as part of the *Foreign* Department.

I hear nothing of your successor. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

On the day on which this letter was written, the Duke of Portland was publicly announced as First Lord of the Treasury, Fox and Lord North as joint Secretaries of State (an arrangement which explains Mr. Grenville's allusion to Ireland as part of the *Foreign* Department), Lord John Cavendish as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty, Viscount Stormont, President of the Council, and the Earl of Carlisle, Privy Seal. The King had endeavoured in vain to retain the services of Lord Thurlow. Upon this point, which had been ceded very reluctantly by the Shelburne Cabinet, the coalition Ministers were inexorable. They insisted upon putting the Seal into commission, with Lord Loughborough as First Commissioner; and, as they were in a position to dictate their own terms, His Majesty at last gave up this point, to which he had clung with more tenacity than all the rest.

His Majesty's attachment to Lord Thurlow may possibly have been founded on the conviction that he could securely calculate on the allegiance of a man who was

ready to avail himself of every opportunity to promote his own interests, and who might therefore be expected, on all occasions, to pay a deferential attention to the wishes of the King. His Lordship's subsequent conduct during the Regency discussions in 1788 afforded a conspicuous proof of his unscrupulousness: when, upon hearing one night, at Carlton House, from one of the King's physicians, of the approaching convalescence of His Majesty, he went down at once to the House, and, to the utter astonishment of everybody, undertook a defence of the King's rights against the Prince and the Whigs, with whom, up to that moment, he had been engaged actively intriguing on the other side. The same implicit devotion to the ascendant authority might no doubt have been looked for from Lord Loughborough, who was a thorough party-man. But there was a certain sturdiness in Thurlow, that rendered him a more valuable adherent, and a more formidable antagonist. He seems to have regarded all mankind with distrust. On the Bench, his disposition vented itself in judgments remarkable for their brevity and the irascible tone in which they were delivered. His utterance was sonorous, with the mysterious pomp and grandiloquence of an oracle, kindling up at times into solemn denunciation. His "make up" must have been perfect in its way, from the awful air of preparation for which his speeches are said to have been so remarkable. Thurlow acted with Pitt and the Whigs, and was pronounced equally impracticable by both. Pitt complained of him that he was always raising difficulties, and

strangely irresolute of purpose on public measures, for a man who was so decided on the Bench. The Whigs had the same complaint against him, and were always embarrassed by him, and at a loss to know how he would act on particular emergencies. Throughout these letters, numerous traces will be found of the continual doubts and apprehensions with which he inspired them.

Lord Loughborough's career was no less remarkable for violence, and the unconscientious pursuit of professional promotion, to which he made all other objects subservient. He and Thurlow had been Solicitor and Attorney-General under Lord North's Administration, and were amongst its most strenuous supporters; although the former had entered Parliament in uncompromising hostility to Lord North's Cabinet, and distinguished himself for some years as one of its bitterest assailants. Having thus opposed Ministers in the early period of their Government, when their measures were most deserving of support, he joined them on the eve of the American war, when their measures were most open to objection; and carried his partizanship to such a height, that even the judicial function did not restrain his zeal. While he was Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, he made war upon Pitt's Administration in the Upper House, where he headed the Foxite Opposition, and became one of the boldest and, consequently, one of the most dangerous of the Prince's advisers on the Regency question.

The coalition, which placed the Seals in the hands of Lord Loughborough, is so vigorously and minutely

pourtrayed in this Correspondence, that it need not here be further alluded to. Its origin, progress and fate present one of those instructive episodes in political history which all statesmen may consult with advantage, and which they will find amply detailed in these letters. The disgrace of the junction certainly lay more heavily on the Whigs than on Lord North. Fox had spent his whole life in assailing the person and policy of Lord North, whose principles were utterly opposed to his own; yet he entered into a Cabinet compact with this very Minister, because Lord Shelburne and Mr. Pitt had endeavoured to repair the errors of his Government—the very errors Mr. Fox had all along condemned—by negotiating a peace which, upon the whole, was more favourable than could have been reasonably expected. Three years before, Lord North made an overture to the Rockingham party for a coalition, but it was rejected; and that which Lord Rockingham considered to be a violation of consistency and an abandonment of principle was, on this memorable occasion, not only adopted by Fox, but negotiated under circumstances which for several weeks placed the interests of the empire in jeopardy. We shall probably never learn with whom the movement originated in the first instance; but that it was pursued with equal earnestness on both sides, admits of no doubt. The only point upon which the contracting parties appear to have differed was the distribution of offices!

One of Lord North's first steps in office, was to address a conciliatory and complimentary letter to Lord Temple;

but it was too late—no temptations could have induced his Lordship to retract.

LORD NORTH TO LORD TEMPLE.

Secretary of State's Office, Whitehall,
April 5th, 1783.

My Lord,

I must beg your Excellency's permission to accompany the despatches which are going to Ireland, by a few lines in a private letter, to express my great concern to find, upon my entrance into this office, that your Excellency has taken a resolution to quit your Government. The important station which you now fill never, I believe, required more discretion and more firmness than at the present moment; and there was, perhaps, never more difficulty in finding any person capable and willing to succeed to an office of such consequence, and to give to His Majesty and to the people of Ireland the satisfaction which your Excellency has done.

If, in the situation in which His Majesty has been pleased to place me, I can be of any service to your Excellency, I hope that you will command me without scruple; and be assured that I shall rejoice in every opportunity of showing the respect with which I have the honour to be,

My Lord,
Your Excellency's most faithful, humble servant,
North.

The Administration had hardly entered upon its functions, when its overthrow became an object of speculation. Everybody saw that it could not stand. It began in a false position, and had not the power to recover itself. General Cuninghame writes to Lord Temple, on the 9th of April: "Lord North will not be called to the House

of Peers till the question on Representation has been discussed in the Commons, then that House will be left entirely to Mr. Fox, and from that moment many wise men already begin to date his downfall. I do not meet with any who think the present arrangement looks permanent. Nobody now pretends to guess who will go to Ireland. The Duke of Devonshire has put himself entirely out of the question, and Lord Fitzwilliam still declines it." This intelligence is corroborated by Mr. Grenville.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

April 9th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I waited till this morning to deliver the Badge, &c., in hopes of receiving your answer to the letter of the 1st instant; but receiving last night, by messenger, yours of the 4th, and perceiving that you had not then received it, I thought I could not any longer delay it.

As it was late before I could get in, I had very little conversation. I think it, however, right to mention to you, that he asked me whether I had heard anything of their having written a letter to you, pressing you to stay; and that when I said that I knew nothing of it except from common report, but had heard that His Majesty's name had been made use of to induce you to stay, he answered that it might be so, but if it had, it was without his consent, or even knowledge.

I send this to you by express, because I cannot help giving credit to the report, and the rather, because I hear nothing of any successor being appointed. The Duke of Devonshire has positively refused; *so has Lord Derby;* and Lord Fitzwilliam (the properest man they have to send) has declined it on account of Lady Fitzwilliam's health, which makes it absolutely

impossible for her to undertake such a journey. My opinion, however—and, I confess, my hope—is, that he will at last be prevailed upon. I have as yet had no sort of communication with our new Secretary, having sent your despatch to Lord Sydney, to whom it was addressed.

Nothing is yet done on the Irish Bill. It has waited till now for the appointment of a Government; and that being at last so happily settled, I applied to Lord Sydney to proceed with it. He told me he wished first to ask the Duke of Portland what his intentions were on the subject, in order to give him an opportunity of taking it up if he chose it. This coincided perfectly with what has always been my idea on the subject, that it ought to proceed from Government; and accordingly we went (in the House of Lords) to the Duke of Portland, who seemed not a little embarrassed, but, however, said he would take it up, and would move for the second reading for Thursday or Friday next—which he has *not* done.

I mean to-morrow to ask him about it; and if he shuffles, shall press Lord Sydney to go on with it. I do not think it impossible that Ponsonby either has or will desire him to amend it. If this should be the case, it must be returned into the House of Commons, where I will certainly attend it, and speak my opinion very freely and plainly upon it. Mornington tells us that Yelverton is dissatisfied with it, as not recognising *the original inherent right* (you see the consistency of these men!); but that Grattan defends it, and he himself approves.

Fitzpatrick, Secretary-at-War, selling his commission, but not his rank; Conway being continued on the staff, in order to prevent Fitzpatrick's issuing the military orders, to which flattering solution Conway submits; Lord Hertford, Chamberlain; Lord Dartmouth, Lord Steward; Duke of Manchester, Paris; Lord Sandwich outrageous, and in violent opposition; Lord Townshend, Ordnance; Sir W. Howe remains, at his brother's particular request.

* Lord North	
* Lord Stormont	
* Lord Carlisle	
Lord Hertford	
Lord Dartmouth	
Lord Townshend	
Lord Loughborough	
Lord Weymouth	
Charles Townshend	*Privy Council offices.*
Eden	
Greville	
* Duke of Portland	
* Fox	
* Lord Keppel	
* Lord John Cavendish	
Burke	
Fitzpatrick	

Tibi Brachia contrahit ardens Scopiur, et cæli plus justâ parte reliquit.

Lord Mansfield, Speaker, House of Lords; Lord de Ferrars resigns; Duke of Richmond, ditto, and violent.

April 11*th*.

So far, I wrote on Wednesday; but delayed sending it, in the hopes of having something more to write to you on the Irish Bill, and in the full confidence that their letter, even if it has been sent, which I doubt, is not likely to make any very great impression upon you.

To-day I attended the House of Lords, as it had been agreed that the Irish Bill should come on. To my utter astonishment, the Duke of Portland, so far from performing his promise, got up when the order of the day was called for, and said, that as the Bill was brought in before he came into office, he did not

consider himself as responsible for its contents. The Duke of Richmond, on this, attacked him pretty warmly on the idea of a Minister suffering a Bill of such magnitude to go on, without having some settled opinion to declare upon it.

A little more conversation of this sort passed, of which you will probably see the detail in the papers, better than I can give it you. It ended by fixing the second reading for Monday, for which day the Lords are summoned. The Chancellor paid you a great many compliments, lamenting your departure, &c.; and saying, at the same time, very justly, that if a new Government was to take place in Ireland, they might possibly be to adopt a system directly contrary to that to which the Bill is calculated.

Lord Sydney is to move it on Monday; the Duke of Portland having told him (in consequence of his having, at my desire, put the question explicitly to him), that he meant to take no part in it. Probably, however, this determination will last only till he gets a fresh set of instructions from Fox.

The news of the day is, that they are quarrelling about having Lord Loughborough of the Cabinet. I am going to the King to deliver your letter, and if it be true, shall very likely hear it.

12th.

Nothing material passed last night, as I was a very short time with the King, and the conversation was quite general; so much so, that I had no kind of opportunity to introduce what you mentioned to me, and I am sure you agree with me, that it was impossible for me to begin that sort of conversation.

I have delayed this letter till to-day, in order to send you the papers containing the debate, which is very accurately stated in them.

I have seen Lord Sydney to-day about this Bill, and I

think we have settled, at last, that on Monday he should move for the second reading, stating a little the grounds of the Bill, and should then proceed to say that the Bill was taken by us out of Lord Beauchamp's hands, because we thought it proper that whatever was done in a business of this nature should proceed from Government; that, for the same reason, having brought it to this stage, he would now resign it into the hands of the present Government. It is a measure which cannot be indifferent: if it accords with the new system to be pursued in Ireland, the persons who are to carry on that system should adopt and forward it. If their system is to be contrary to it, nothing can then be so pernicious as a Bill upon the subject of Ireland passed in opposition to the ideas of Government. The object of the Bill certainly must be to conciliate the affections of the people of Ireland to Government there, and in England. Would this object be answered, if the Bill be passed without the express concurrence and consent of that Government which now exists? Will not the effect be the direct contrary, if they are to be told—which was Yelverton's expression to Mornington—that the Bill puts Ireland in a worse situation than before the Repeal?

The more I think all this over, the more I am convinced that we ought not to commit ourselves to the event of a measure which is already so much found fault with by the Duke of Portland's people. If a Lord-Lieutenant of theirs is appointed, he will be to condemn it, and to give fresh encouragement to another ferment, which will be to be allayed by some new measure here. Surely, all this is neither for the peace of Ireland, nor for the dignity of Great Britain. Upon these grounds it is, that I think Lord Sydney ought to leave the business to them.

The Duke of Dorset is turned out to make room for Lord Cholmondely.

I hear not a word of your successor. Pray do not forget to

desire Fremantle to reform my household. Adieu, my dear brother.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

Lord Northington and Lord Hillsborough, are most talked of for Ireland.

The loan, said to be abominable, has been done for more than 6 per cent. profit. A large *private seal.*

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, April 15th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I enclose you the papers of this morning, which will give you a pretty exact idea of the conversation, rather than debate, which took place upon the second reading of the Irish Bill. The "Morning Post" comes nearest to the Duke of Portland's speech. That in the "Morning Chronicle" was evidently inserted by some of their people (to whom that paper is devoted), and contains rather what he ought to have said, and, perhaps, what he was instructed to say, than what he actually did say. None of the papers have, however, given the following words, which I remarked to Mornington the moment they were spoke, and took down upon paper as soon as I came home, so that I can be positive as to their having been exact.

"As to this Bill, I concur in it, because I think it was made *necessary* by what was done last year, and consider it as *a necessary consequence* of that."

After this, I hope we shall not have to hear Mr. Fox, in England, or those whom he supposes his friends in Ireland, say, what Mr. Fox said when the Bill was first moved for, that it was *wholly unnecessary*.

I waited to send this off till I saw whether there would be

any alteration proposed, or any debate on the wording of the Bill in the Committee. I went to the House, and there saw Lord Thurlow, who told me that if the Bill had not come recommended by you, he should have had a great deal to say upon it; but as it was, he meant not to speak at all with respect to it, on your account.

I hear nothing of any successor to you, and begin to be a little uneasy about it, for a reason which Jemmy desired me to press to you, though, I confess, it appears stronger to him than it does to me. What I mean is, that in the manner in which these people are going on, throwing away the scabbard entirely both with the King and the people, it is utterly impossible but that they must overturn themselves almost immediately; and if a change should happen while you are still in Ireland, you could have no excuse for not remaining, which, after all that has passed, would be most unpleasant.

Now for my own part, I own I do not expect quite so sudden a dissolution of the present Government, because I am sure they will not resign, and I do not think the King will be able to turn them out till the session is over. Still, however, your being here would be very material, standing in so high a situation as you do; and in that idea I have a wish, if you should not disapprove of it, to take an opportunity in the House of Commons, immediately after the holidays (or at least as soon as I can hear from you, supposing nobody appointed before), to call the attention of the House to the situation of Ireland, suffering at least as much from an interregnum as this country did, and to say that the same motives which made it, in the opinion of all the world, necessary for Lord Shelburne and Pitt actually to quit their situations before a successor was appointed, rather than hold responsible office without responsibility, must also in the end actuate you, however unwilling, &c., &c.

Lees is appointed Under Secretary to Lord North. The

Duke of Dorset forced out at the requisition of the Prince of Wales, contrary, as it is said, to an express promise made to him by the King. Fortescue (Lord Clermont's nephew) desired me to remind you of a promise of the Linen Board next after two, which, he says, is now the case.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

Up to this time, no successor was found for Lord Temple. Mr. Grenville, writing on the 19th, says: "They are under real difficulties about your successor. They have offered the situation even to Lord Althorpe, who refused it two days ago. I rather think, putting together circumstances and appearances, that it will end in Lord Hillsborough." A successor, however, was at last found in the person of Lord Northington.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

April 25th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I believe I may at last congratulate you upon the appointment of Lord Northington, and Wyndham of Norfolk, to succeed us in our respective situations. It is not yet publicly notified, but I have every reason to think that you may depend upon my information. As soon as it is declared, I mean to see them, in order to settle with the former the time which he wishes to have for his preparations, &c., and with the latter the taking such of my things as he may be disposed to. After that I think of setting out for Ireland *tout de suite*. There is no public news that I hear of. Things seem to remain pretty much in the same situation as when I wrote last.

Adieu, my dearest brother,

Believe me most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

A short correspondence took place, at this juncture, between the Duke of Portland and Lord Temple. It is impossible not to perceive, or to suspect, in the Duke of Portland's letter, a certain consciousness of the discredit attached to his position. He deprecates, in a tone of courtierly sensitiveness, all allusion to the political changes which have separated him from Lord Temple in public life, and, with the air of one who is not quite satisfied with himself, he seeks to turn his unconfessed distrust of the course he has adopted into a compliment to his correspondent. Lord Temple's reply is strongly marked with the true character of the writer—frank, bold, honest above all things, and straight to the purpose. The reproach contained in his closing words—that it severely pained him to think he had reason to complain of the personal conduct of a Ministry, chiefly composed of "those who had the advantage of being denominated the friends of the late Lord Rockingham"—terminates appropriately a correspondence which could not be maintained with much satisfaction on either side.

THE DUKE OF PORTLAND TO LORD TEMPLE.

London, Saturday, April 26th, 1783.

My dear Lord,

I am very much ashamed at having so long delayed my very sincere thanks for the effectual attention your Excellency has given to my wishes in favour of Mr. Coppinger and Mr. Doyle. My gratitude for this mark of your friendship is not less sincere than that which poor Doyle feels, and I certainly could not do more justice to it than by expressing it in the same terms which he has used upon this occasion, as they most emphatically

describe the feelings of his heart. I cannot say that this circumstance has added to the concern with which I learnt your determination to resign the Government of Ireland, because the measure of the misfortune was full before this event, but it considerably increases the regret with which I contemplate the difference of opinion which now subsists between us, and almost inclines me to doubt the degree of obedience which my ideas of duty to the public make requisite. But this is a subject upon which my silence hitherto must indicate my disinclination to enter. I wish, at this moment, as little to defend as to arraign. Your Excellency is as well satisfied with your conduct as I am with mine. Time may do more than argument, and desirous as I am for the concurrence of your opinion upon public questions, continue me in the possession of your private friendship, and I will accept that as an auspicious omen.

I am, with great truth and regard,

My dear Lord,

Your Excellency's most obedient and obliged humble servant,

PORTLAND.

LORD TEMPLE TO THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

Dublin Castle, May 1st, 1783.

MY LORD,

I am honoured with your Grace's letter of the 26th instant, and must return my best thanks for the expressions of regard with which you have noted my appointment of Mr. Coppinger, and of Mr. Doyle, to the situations which they now hold, at your Grace's recommendation, to which I have truly given the earliest attention in my power.

It is really a misfortune to me to find that our political ideas have so materially differed. I perfectly agree with your Grace in wishing not to defend nor arraign, and shall therefore wave the subject, as far as it regards the change in His Majesty's councils.

But I cannot help complaining in private, as I have uniformly in public, that I have been singularly unfortunate in the treatment which I have met with. I resigned on the 12th of March, and that resignation was notorious to every one conversant in public business, and the intention communicated to your Grace on the 2nd of March. Notwithstanding this, I understand that no person was recommended for this situation in the formation of the new Ministry; nor from the date of their acceptance did I receive any notification of the King's acceptance of my office, nor any apology for the delay, nor any request to remain till the new appointment or arrival of my successor, nor any communication upon the very extensive business of this kingdom, for which I have declined any responsibility; but, on the contrary, I have been, under these circumstances, detained in a situation without responsibility, which was actually objected as a charge against Mr. Pitt, while I have been labouring to disengage myself; and, ultimately, I have received Lord Northington's appointment, dated on the 24th (two days after it had been communicated by every one connected with Government to their friends), without one line of the King's approbation of my conduct, in circumstances and moments very critical, unless I am to interpret Lord North's opinion on that subject, as the official notification of His Majesty's satisfaction.

These circumstances, my Lord, have much galled me, because they are personal; and because they are not necessarily connected with the change of Government, and have laid me under the necessity of resenting it by expressions very decisive, in my despatch of the 24th; and your Grace will easily believe that the period for my relief, fixed by Lord North for six weeks hence, after a resignation on the 12th of March, has not much soothed me. I shall regret any injury to the public service, but I have my private feelings, and they will not suffer me to remain in such a situation for such a time, even if the state of

this kingdom justified such an addition to the absolute interregnum which has existed now since the second week in February: but at the moment in which I write I remain totally uninformed upon any of the voluminous details which I have submitted, and particularly upon the subject the most delicate from every consideration which depends upon it, I mean the Parliament, which stands for next Tuesday. These facts, which I have shortly detailed, press strongly on my mind. I have wished to show every attention to your Grace, from whom I have experienced great kindness, and to reconcile my private sensations to a treatment which I must think unjustifiable, and which I totally separate from the great political considerations which have guided our respective lives, and with which I doubt not we are both equally satisfied. These considerations never would for a moment have broken in upon private friendship and regard, but it severely pains me to think that I have reason to complain of the personal conduct of a Ministry in which your Grace has taken so distinguished a part, and in which I must conclude, from your letter to me, that the powers of Government are solely invested in those who had the advantage of being denominated the friends of the late Lord Rockingham.

I am to apologize to your Grace for the length of this letter, but I cannot conclude it without thanking you for the assurances of your regard and good-will.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Grace's obedient humble servant,
N. T.

The despatch alluded to, dated 24th, officially addressed to Lord North, stated in detail, and with equal earnestness and decision, the just grounds of complaint here repeated to the Duke of Portland. Mr. Grenville, having

no option in a matter of so much moment, and which admitted of no pause or remedy, forwarded the despatch to Lord North; although he would gladly have withheld it, under an apprehension that it might expose Lord Temple to injurious imputations, not only on the score of impatience, but as desiring to throw obstacles in the way of his successor. In the hope of averting the latter supposition, Mr. Grenville visited Lord Northington, to express on his part, and on that of Lord Temple, the desire of placing the Government in his hands with every possible advantage to his personal convenience and the public service. This interview was attended with the best result, so far as Lord Northington was concerned.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, April 28th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

Yesterday and this evening, I received your letters of the 21st and 24th instant.

With respect to the first, there is, I think, no need of saying anything as to its contents, except that it appears to me most clearly that the Bill passed as a measure of the new Government, especially from the Duke of Portland's words, which I took down and sent to you. In all events, however, it had passed before I received your despatch relating to it; so that the delivery of that could have been of no use either in influencing their conduct in present, or affording room for comments upon it in future.

The despatches contained in your packet of the 24th, I have

this night sent to Lord North, conceiving, from the expressions of your note, that I had no option whatever with respect to them. If I had felt myself at liberty, I must own that I think I should have hesitated about it; as Lord Northington is formally announced, and consequently your main object, that of a speedy release from your situation, will soon be accomplished by the natural impatience he will feel to take, what you, on the other hand, are so desirous to give him. All other objects, that of marking to the King and to them your sense of the personal incivility they have shown you, and that of pointing out their scandalous inattention to the business of Ireland, might have been attained by twenty other ways; while I cannot but fear that this will be liable to the imputation which they are so studiously endeavouring to fix upon you, and which, of all others, I should think you would wish to avoid—that of throwing additional difficulties in the way of your successor. I am convinced nothing is farther from your intention: his situation will already be much less easy than every Englishman—and particularly every man who looks forward, and probably at no very distant period, to a share in the Government of the empire—must wish it. And even the appearance of contributing to his difficulties will, I think, hurt you here; at the same time, that it will give him an opportunity of throwing upon your shoulders any want of success which he may experience.

Upon these considerations, which I am sure you feel, and which I trust you will excuse my stating, I think of leaving my name with him to-morrow, and of expressing either to him or to Wyndham, with civility, but at the same time with a proper reserve (so as not to commit you or myself), my readiness to give any information in my power which they may wish to receive. If I see either of them to-morrow, I shall most likely in a very few days be able to inform you, in person,

of the probable day of your release. I look forward with much impatience to our meeting. In the meantime,

Believe me, my dearest brother,

Ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Upon reading this over, I find I have said nothing of the House of Commons. Jemmy is not in town, and I own I think the saying anything on the subject now (after Lord North's appointment), would be so strong, that I am afraid to venture upon it without his advice.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, April 29th, 1783.

My dear Brother,

I have this day seen Lord Northington. He entered a good deal into your complaint with respect to their personal usage of yourself, and said that as soon as the new Government were appointed, they had written to express to you those wishes, which every one felt, for your remaining; that your answer to that had not been received till a few days before his acceptance; and that they had written to notify to you the day of his being to be declared, which had been postponed till to-morrow, merely out of attention to you, in order that it might not take place till you was apprized of it.

To this I answered, that I did not understand you had received any other communication than the mere official notification of Lord North's appointment; but that, be that as it might, I was sure it would not alter (as it was a matter only between Lord North and the other Ministers, and you) your wishes to place the Government in your successor's hands with every possible advantage.

We had a little more conversation, which turned entirely on generals, with many expressions of personal civility on his part; and that he intended to write to-morrow, immediately after his being declared, to state to you the time which he desired for his preparations, &c., &c.

Pitt spoke to Lord Bulkeley the other day, to express how much he admired your conduct and character, particularly in remaining so long; and that you were the person to whom the country looked for the first situations.

Adieu, my dear brother.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Tom asked me to-day, whether you had mentioned anything to me of your having received a letter from him.

This interview was followed by an immediate communication from Lord Northington.

LORD NORTHINGTON TO LORD TEMPLE.

St. James's Place, April 30th, 1783.

My dear Lord,

It is with much concern I find that your Excellency has not been prevailed upon to continue in the execution of a Government which all accounts agree, and universal opinion confirms, your Excellency to have conducted with so much credit to yourself and satisfaction to the country over which you have the honour to preside. I could have hoped, that the many honourable testimonies of regard given to you might have produced other sentiments, and that the general wishes of the country might have effected what the Administration here might have attempted in vain. This, however, not having been the case, I have it to notify to your Excellency, that the

pressing instances of my friends have been able to overcome my own apprehensions, and I have consented to accept the arduous situation of becoming your Excellency's successor.

I have had the honour of being declared this day, by His Majesty in Council, as the person to relieve your Excellency, which, as I understand your wishes to be, that it should be as soon as can be, with any tolerable convenience to the affairs at home, and the settlement of my establishment in Ireland, I shall forward as much as possible. I hope, therefore, to be able to set off from here in a month from the day of my declaration, at furthest, by a week after, which I understand will be about the time you find necessary for the arrangement of your affairs, and the soonest you would have been able to have gone from hence.

I had the pleasure of a conversation the other day with Mr. Grenville, who very politely acquainted me with your Lordship's sentiments, and readiness to give every communication which might be of service to a successor. These assurances I was happy to receive, although I could entertain little doubt that a man of your Lordship's honour and liberality of mind would feel a pleasure and satisfaction in doing that which others, not with the same liberality of sentiment, might consider only as a duty upon them. I shall think myself much obliged, and shall derive no small assistance from a communication of your Lordship's active exertions and inquiries since you have been in Ireland; and I make no doubt I shall find many plans which it will be much for the interest of Ireland for me to adopt and carry into execution.

I have the honour to be, with great truth,

My dear Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant,

NORTHINGTON.

Amongst the papers in Lord Temple's handwriting,

is the rough draft of a letter to Lord North, dated May 2nd, complaining that he had received no answer to his despatch of April 24th, although a messenger had just arrived, bearing His Majesty's commands on the subject of the Parliament. The terms of this letter show how deeply he felt the neglect of the Administration, in reference to the public interests involved in his resignation.

LORD TEMPLE TO LORD NORTH.

Dublin Castle, May 2nd, 1783.

My Lord,

The messenger who is this moment arrived with His Majesty's commands upon the subject of the Parliament, has not brought me one syllable in answer to my despatch of the 24th, so interesting to my feelings. Your Lordship, I am certain, does not propose to delay receiving His Majesty's commands upon the many matters contained in it, and yet your total silence upon it, and the very distant day to which the Parliament is prorogued (for which measure the King's servants alone are responsible), do not hold out to me that prospect of release, which I still conceive, from every principle of public duty to this kingdom, and from every personal consideration to me, will not be delayed many days longer. I have sufficiently pressed upon your Lordship's attention these reasons of my conduct. I have only to add, that I have well considered the alternative to which I may be driven, and must again remind your Lordship, that in no contingency do I consider myself responsible for any one of the consequences which may be the result of the public inattention to this Government, under which this high and important office has been left unfilled from the formation of the new Government till the 24th ult., and under which the same interregnum is, in your Lordship's despatch of that date, held out for six weeks longer.

And I am the more particularly anxious for this answer, from the heartfelt concern with which I wait for the notification of His Majesty's sense of those assurances of attachment and dutiful respect, which makes me solicitous that no part of my conduct may be liable to misconstruction: to his wisdom I submit those considerations, which touch so nearly the interests of this kingdom, and to his justice, with all humility, those which are personal to myself.

I have the honour to be,

N. T.

While this letter was on its way to London, it was crossed by Lord North's answer to the despatch of the 24th, containing, in detail, the defence of the Government on the numerous points pressed upon their attention by the Lord-Lieutenant.

LORD NORTH TO LORD TEMPLE.

Whitehall, May 5th, 1783.

My Lord,

The anxiety which your Excellency felt in writing your letter of the 24th of last month, cannot, I will venture to affirm, possibly exceed my surprise at receiving it. Having, during the very little time that I have been in office, made it my object to return the most speedy answers to all your Excellency's letters, and having had the good fortune in every instance to convey the most favourable return all to your Excellency's wishes and commands, you may well suppose that I must have been much struck at reading your complaints of ill-treatment, indelicacy, or something (whatever it may be) that deserves a harsher name. If, in the course of my life, it had not been frequently my lot to see very great offence taken upon very slight causes, the terms of your Excellency's letter would have

given me more uneasiness. But, upon a calm and dispassionate review of your complaints, and of the conduct of His Majesty's servants, I can, by no means, either in their name, or in my own, plead guilty to the neglects and other misbehaviour which your Excellency thinks proper to lay to our charge.

Your Excellency is of opinion, that His Majesty's servants should have employed themselves in endeavouring to find a successor to your Excellency from the receipt of your letter of the 12th of March. If your Excellency will give yourself the trouble to recollect the transactions of that period, you will, I am sure, concur with me in opinion, that it would have been the extreme of folly and presumption for any of His Majesty's present servants to have treated upon this subject with any person breathing before the 2nd of April, when they had the honour of kissing His Majesty's hand. Long after the day of the receipt of your Excellency's letter, it was perfectly uncertain here, to whose hands His Majesty would commit the management of his affairs; nay, your Excellency cannot be ignorant, that, since that time, the expectations (and I doubt not the hopes) of the public were fixed upon seeing your Excellency at the head of the Administration.

The 2nd of April was, therefore, the first moment that any of His Majesty's present servants could take any step towards the nomination of a new Chief Governor of Ireland. From that time measures for that purpose have been constantly pursued, till the affair was finally settled, on the 24th of last month. The various impediments which have arisen I need not mention to your Excellency, but the fact is exactly as I have stated; and, as the delay is not unprecedented, nor even very long, I think it is not trespassing too much upon your Excellency's candour to expect that you will believe my assertion.

In your last letter, your Excellency seems hurt, that the London newspapers should have announced in Dublin the appointment of the Earl of Northington two days before you

received my letter. Whatever might have been the information or the conjectures of the news-writers, I assure your Excellency that I wrote within an hour after I received authentic information of that appointment.

As to the total and absolute neglect of Irish considerations, on which your Excellency expresses yourself so strongly, you certainly cannot mean to allude to the ordinary and current business (which has been regularly attended to, and has met with the most speedy decision that each case would admit of), but to some great commercial points, upon which your Excellency had written at different times to the late Administration, and which had not, as I collect from your Excellency's letter, been considered, when they quitted His Majesty's service.

I well remember, that Lord Carlisle very fully and clearly stated, very earnestly and repeatedly pressed, the demands of Ireland, with respect to the refusal of Portugal to admit their woollen goods. Lord Hillsborough, then Secretary of State, urged the claim of Ireland with much zeal and perseverance in his despatches to the Court of Portugal, and in his conferences with the Portuguese Minister in London. What was done in that business by the late Administration I know not: nothing of that sort has yet come to my knowledge; but, during the few days that we have been in office, the Secretary of State for the Foreign Department has renewed this negotiation with Monsieur de Pinto, and I doubt not but it will be pursued with all the attention that so important a question deserves. But it is singular, that His Majesty's present servants should be criminated for not having finished in the first busy three weeks of a new Administration what has been depending during the two last Ministries, and, notwithstanding the efforts of one of them at least, is by no means so far advanced as to promise an immediate conclusion.

That the interests of Ireland should not be separated from those of Great Britain in any commercial treaty with France

and Spain, and that they should be considered in every arrangement with the United States of America, are important truths, upon which your Excellency, with much propriety, lays a great stress. They cannot be urged too often or too strongly; but whether your Excellency has any particular measures to suggest on these heads, or whether the late Administration, when they signed the provisional articles, and projected the commercial treaties with the House of Bourbon, had formed any detailed and digested plan upon these principles, I am not informed; but this is certain, that it would have been very hasty and rash, for His Majesty's servants in the first hurry of a new arrangement, before any commercial treaty is formed with America, or the definitive treaties signed with France and Spain, to think themselves capable of proposing a well-formed system of commerce, adapted to the new situation of Great Britain with her late and present dependencies.

Your Excellency will consider, that we came to the situations we now possess, in the midst of a session of Parliament, with almost all the material business of that session unfinished, indeed, hardly begun, and that, besides Parliamentary affairs, there never was a time in which the Executive Power was occupied with a greater variety of complicated and important questions.

Many of the matters to which your Excellency alludes, must necessarily employ the attention of His Majesty's Ministers for a long space of time. Your Excellency will, therefore, I hope, judge of our exertions according to the capacities of ordinary men, and not according to the rapidity of your Excellency's conceptions, and the eagerness of your zeal for the prosperity of Ireland.

I beg pardon for detaining your Excellency so long, but I trust that what I have written may serve to justify me to your Excellency, when I confess, that the heavy and severe censures

in your Excellency's letter have produced no other emotions in my mind than those of astonishment.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest truth and respect,
My Lord,
Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,
NORTH.

Earl Temple, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

Perhaps "astonishment," after all, was the most convenient refuge for Lord North, under the circumstances. But it is clear, throughout the whole correspondence, that, let the responsibility rest where it might, a delay—fraught with the worst consequences to the repose of the kingdom—had been suffered to take place, greatly detrimental to the public service, and personally compromising to Lord Temple. Lord North himself acknowledges that from the 2nd to the 24th of April was consumed in the pursuit of measures which ought to have been carried into operation without delay. The new Ministry confess that they were three weeks looking for a successor to Lord Temple, instead of having come into office prepared to fill that important vacancy at once. They could not plead ignorance of Lord Temple's determination to retire; for he had apprised the Duke of Portland that his mind was made up before the coalition was formed. There was no excuse for the protracted inconvenience—public and private—to which Lord Temple was exposed, except the fact that the Ministry, too eager in the chase of office, had accepted the reins of Government before they were ready to undertake its functions; and that it was not until the situation

of Lord-Lieutenant had been offered to one nobleman after another, they at last found a peer who was willing to incur the hazard of serving under them in so responsible a post. That Lord Temple should have expressed his feelings strongly on this occasion, that he should have complained warmly of the personal slight with which he was treated, and that he should have represented with earnestness the injury inflicted on the public service throughout this harassing interregnum, was due equally to his own character, and to the duty he owed to the King. Instead of being enabled to relinquish office to his successor with ease and satisfaction to both, the affair was so hurried, that in the correspondence which ensued between Lord Temple and Lord Northington, a tone of asperity insensibly displaces the amicable dispositions with which it opens, and shows that the political discord which had been sown by the "unprincipled coalition," was not without a damaging influence upon the private relations of public men. Lord Temple, after sacrificing much of his own personal feelings to adapt his withdrawal to the convenience of Lord Northington, at last expressed his resolution—at any risk of consequences—not to be in Dublin on the 4th of June, the anniversary of the King's birthday. To this point the correspondence, interspersed with one or two letters from Lord North, is finally drawn.

LORD TEMPLE TO LORD NORTHINGTON.

Dublin Castle, May 6th, 1783.

My dear Lord,

My former letter will have sufficiently stated to you my full determination that my private feelings should not prevent me

from showing to you every personal regard, which is so much your due. My line was long since adopted; and standing upon public grounds, I could not yield to the honourable testimonies which I have received, much less to any solicitations from the King's servants, *if any such had been made.* But for particular reasons I desire to assure you that, neither directly or indirectly, have I received, since the hour of their appointment, any such intimation, or any solicitation to continue in this Government till after your appointment. For *that* attention I should thank them, as I should not have conceived that they could entertain any real wish that I should act with people with whom I did not agree in general principles. But my complaint is, that the kingdom has materially suffered by this delay; that it still suffers; and that this consideration will not permit me to remain, independently of the considerations of a personal nature, which I strongly feel.

Under these circumstances, I must strongly press upon your convenience. I feel it, and, with truth, I regret it, as a real misfortune; for, from private friendship, I would do everything which could mark my regard; but you will see, upon your arrival, that I have not exaggerated the difficulties of the country under such an interregnum. I accept your expressions of esteem, as I should, with every wish to return them by real services. I think that I have the means of assisting you by information, and you may command me; but I must be relieved before the 25th of May, for reasons which involve my public character and credit; and when I fix that period, I assure you, my dear Lord, that I sacrifice much of my private feelings to a desire of accommodating you. In truth, I wish to you every success in your undertaking; and I feel a most unpleasant difficulty in the present moment, from my private sensations with respect to you, and the other principles, public and private, which make me appear to fail in attention to you. This is my only uneasiness. But at all events, let me continue

to stand well in your regards. As to every article of domestic accommodation, much time might be spared if you would commission our friend Baugh, or send your steward to Ireland. In all this, do as you will; but be assured that

I am, my dear Lord,

Your very faithful and obedient servant,

(Signed) NUGENT TEMPLE.

P.S.—When I fix the 25th of May, I allow one month from the day of the notification of your acceptance—a time, I confess, short; but, in truth, I was prepared within that period. At all events, though I mean to urge that day in my despatches to Government, all that I am anxious about is to be relieved before the 4th of June, as you will see particular reasons of delicacy for my not holding that Court. And when you recollect that from the 17th of February the Government of Ireland has been nearly at a stand, you will see the necessity of it in a public point of view; and be assured, that personal impatience or want of regard to you has no share in the resolution which I have taken not to be in Ireland upon that day.

Your Lordship will derive little advantage from the communication of my ideas on the subject of Parliament, as the Cabinet, by their prorogation, have decided that arduous question; but be assured, that I have every inclination to show to you every attention of that nature; although I must think that the conduct of the Cabinet has acquitted me of every *duty* of communication.

I have added this postscript, having kept my letter one day, expecting Mr. Grenville. I must now close it, with every expression of regard and esteem.

N. T.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Pall Mall, May 7th, 1783.
By Lord Northington's Messenger.

My dear Brother,

I understand from Lord Northington, whom I saw to-day, that both he and Lord North write to you this evening on the subject of his departure, which I understand to be fixed for the beginning of June.

I had some conversation with him on the subject, in which I enlarged upon the ideas of your letter, your personal good-will and wishes for his success, the mischief of the delay, and the difficulties of your situation; and particularly stated the circumstances of Ireland with respect to its army, to the Fencibles, and to the different points of commerce which call for the immediate interposition of Government, and which we meant to have settled by having a Parliament sitting at this time, if things had gone on as they were. His observations on all this you will, I suppose, receive to-night.

I am in some doubt what to do about coming over to you, as, on account of the Prince's death, there is no levée to-day, nor, I fear, on Friday. If there is, I will set out that evening. It is the more unfortunate, as I wished to know the King's ideas as to your coming away. Your provocation is certainly very great; yet I cannot help fearing that such a step will hurt you here. I still wish to see the King, and will try it, if I can.

Pitt's motion comes on to-day; but nobody knows it, though it is imagined to go only to fifty or one hundred Knights, and to some enlargement of boroughs, to take place only on proof of delinquency, as in the case of Cricklade and Shoreham.

No news of any Dutch peace, nor can I guess why we are arming, as is said to be the case; but query. Adieu.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

LORD NORTHINGTON TO LORD TEMPLE.

St. James's Place, May 7th, 1783.

My dear Lord,

Your despatch of the 29th of April, afforded me no small degree of pleasure, as it conveyed to me such flattering assurances of your Lordship's esteem and regard; sentiments perfectly similar to which, I beg to assure your Lordship I entertain for you, with the utmost sincerity and attachment. I feel likewise, with much satisfaction and gratitude, those kind and liberal offers of information and communication upon all points which may tend to give me an early knowledge of the state and situation of that country, and shall hope from such assistance to be the better enabled to encounter the many difficulties and embarrassments which I already foresee against my Administration. I sincerely wish it was in my power to answer that part of your Lordship's letter upon the subject of my speedy departure, as you wish; but although on many accounts, both of a public and private nature, some delay is unavoidable, it is my wish and my intention, as far as concerns myself, that a delay of a moment shall not be created, that is not of absolute necessity for my own indispensable convenience. Some attention is likewise necessary to His Majesty's servants, whose time is now so much employed in the parliamentary discussion of many subjects of great importance. The many objects which claim much consideration, as stated in your Excellency's despatches, and which have been pressed so frequently, and urged so forcibly by your Lordship on His Majesty's late servants, and which appeared to them so weighty

in themselves, and of such moment as to require so long a time for deliberation, cannot be suddenly and easily resolved upon by Ministers of so short a date in office, and with such a pressure of public affairs upon them, occasioned by a discontinuance of any active or responsible Government for such a period, for which they cannot be in the least responsible.

I could, therefore, much wish your Lordship to believe, that if, in the desire you have to be relieved, your wishes are not met by me to the utmost, that you will not attribute it to any want of a due exertion to remove the difficulties which obstruct my compliance therewith, or the desire of staying here myself a week longer; but that if I am enabled to overcome them sooner, and His Majesty's Ministers are ready to give me their final opinions earlier than I have expected they will be able to do, that I shall embrace with pleasure an opportunity to relieve your Lordship from a situation you feel so unpleasant and irksome to you.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Your very faithful and obedient servant,

NORTHINGTON.

LORD NORTH TO LORD TEMPLE.

Whitehall, May 9th, 1783.

MY LORD,

Your Excellency may be assured that it is not the wish of His Majesty's servants on this side of the water to detain your Excellency in Ireland a moment longer than the time that will be necessary for your Excellency's successor so to arrange his business here, as to be able to relieve your Excellency in your Government.

Since the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 29th of last month, I have shown to the Earl of Northington all your letters respecting your earnest desire of quitting your present

situation without delay, and received yesterday from his Lordship the letter which accompanies this packet. I have reason to believe that his Lordship is endeavouring to get himself ready for his departure, with all possible diligence. His letter will best explain to your Excellency when he expects to set out for Dublin.

Your Excellency, in one part of your letter, seems hurt, that mine of the 24th of last month did not convey, in terms sufficiently explicit, a communication of His Majesty's gracious acceptance and approbation of your Excellency's services. Your Excellency certainly may infer, not only from that letter, but from the whole tenor of my correspondence, that your Administration of Ireland is approved by His Majesty; and having substantially conveyed the royal sentiments on that subject, I hope that I shall stand excused by your Excellency, if I should not have used any particular form of words, though it might have been more proper on the occasion, and more agreeable to your Excellency's wishes.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest truth and respect,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

NORTH.

Earl Temple, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

LORD NORTHINGTON TO LORD TEMPLE.

St. James's Place, May 16th, 1783.

MY LORD,

The last letter which I had the honour of receiving from your Lordship has very sufficiently stated the determinations you are come to with regard to your stay, and that your resolution is fixed, at *all events*, not to be in Dublin on the 4th of June.

I must confess myself perfectly at a loss to conceive what those *particular reasons of delicacy* may be, which appear to have made such weighty impression on your Lordship's mind, so as to have produced this resolution; but as the consequence will be the placing the Government of the country in other hands, and is a measure which does not seem to meet with the approbation of His Majesty, I shall think it my duty (however greatly my convenience must be the sacrifice) to attend, to the utmost of my power, to His Majesty's wishes, that such an event may not take place.

It is my purpose, therefore, to relieve your Excellency from your Government, as you desire, before the 4th of June, and to be in Dublin on that day, under circumstances the most unpleasant and mortifying, an half-formed household, and the impossibility of being able to pay that respect and reverence which is due to the happy event of that day. It is my intention to quit London on the 28th or 29th instant, and to make it a point to be at Holyhead early on the 1st of June, so that if the wind is fair and the tide should serve, I may be in Dublin that night.

I cannot too frequently return my thanks to your Lordship for the very kind and friendly intentions you have of affording me every communication in your power, and of allowing me to derive every assistance I can from your Lordship's great knowledge of the country, its interests, and the view of its parties and leading men. It will be with the greatest pleasure I shall ever receive any instance of your Lordship's regard, and I am sure none can be more agreeable, or of more importance to me, than this will be.

With regard to the articles of domestic accommodation, I shall reserve the discussion of them to Sir Willoughby Acton and Mr. Fremantle. Sir Willoughby proposes to set out for Dublin on Monday next, and is so obliging as to undertake this

trouble for me. He will have the honour of paying his respects to your Excellency, if you will give him leave.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Your most obedient and faithful humble servant,

NORTHINGTON.

LORD NORTH TO LORD TEMPLE.

Whitehall, May 17th, 1783.

MY LORD,

Upon the receipt of your Excellency's letters of the 9th and 10th of this month, I took immediately every step in my power that might forward your Excellency's wishes, and have now the satisfaction of informing your Excellency that Lord Northington will not fail to be at Holyhead on the 1st day of next month; and I am commanded by His Majesty to express to your Excellency his wish, that you will not quit the Government of Ireland before the arrival of Lord Northington. Although your Excellency will, according to this arrangement, be detained a few days longer than the 25th of the present month, yet I hope that the time fixed by Lord Northington is not so remote as to cause any public or private inconvenience.

By my letter of the 9th instant, I flatter myself that I have removed the uneasiness which your Excellency has expressed more than once, because His Majesty's approbation of your Excellency's Government has not been notified in a manner the most agreeable to your Excellency. I am sure that when you read that letter, your Excellency was convinced that your former complaint was ill-founded; that His Majesty's gracious approbation of your Excellency's conduct has been substantially conveyed to your Excellency; and that there is nothing in the whole tenor of my letters which can justify your Excellency's opinion, that a total change of system is to be adopted both

with regard to the Chief Governor, and the measures of Government in Ireland.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

NORTH.

P.S.—The messenger carries three letters from Lord Northington—one to your Excellency, one to Lieutenant-General Burgoyne, and another to General Baugh.

His Excellency the Earl Temple, &c., &c., &c.

LORD NORTHINGTON TO LORD TEMPLE.

St. James's Place, May 25th, 1783.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your Excellency has not been able to remove those unpleasant and mortifying ideas I entertain at the thoughts of being obliged to pay either no attention to a day, to which all honour and respect is due, or to do it in a manner unbecoming, and not suitable to the occasion. Indeed, my information by numerous Irish gentlemen now here, tells me that, although it may not be expected that I should give (what your Lordship says) *a dinner* on the occasion, it will be expected I shall hold a *Court*, and that I shall give a ball. Then I understand likewise, from your letters, as you declare your positive and fixed resolution not to hold a *Court* on that day in the despatch, the last but one which I had the honour to receive, and that from strong reasons of delicacy, both public and private, which, as your Excellency does not explain, at this distance and in my state of ignorance at present I am at a loss to conceive.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Your faithful and obedient humble servant,

NORTHINGTON.

Lord Temple's administration was too brief to enable him to develop the plans he had laid down for the benefit of Ireland; but the most conclusive testimony that can be adduced in favour of his policy is the assurance he received from Lord North, that no intention of deviating from it was entertained by the new Ministers. Although, however, Lord Northington did not openly deviate from the main points of his policy, he followed it up with a lukewarmness and insincerity that rendered it to a great extent inoperative. His Lordship appears to have betrayed, not only in his measures, but in the spirit and tone in which they were brought forward, an unworthy desire to discredit the influence and reputation of his predecessor, who pursued a line of conduct after he left Ireland which—putting aside all obligations to the public—entitled him at least to protection against such sinister attempts to undermine the confidence his zealous services had acquired. Having resigned the Government into the hands of Lord Northington, to whom he frankly offered all the assistance and information his experience enabled him to bestow, he strictly avoided all interference in Irish affairs that might be likely—even remotely—to embarrass his successor. Numerous applications were made to him on a variety of subjects; individuals and parties sought his advice and interposition; but he made the same answer to all—referring them at once to the established authority, and declining to use any influence, upon the most trifling occasions, which in his position he might have legitimately exercised. His magnanimity was thrown away upon a thankless soil. The situation he had

filled with so much honour and advantage, was now occupied by a nobleman who could neither appreciate nor imitate his lofty example.

The principal objects to which Lord Temple had directed his attention were the Bill of Renunciation, and a wise economy in the public expenditure. The former he carried; the latter it was impossible to consolidate in the short term of six months. In his indefatigable labours for the good of Ireland he never stooped to conciliate faction at the cost of duty, or the sacrifice of principle. He administered his high office to promote the interests, and not to pander to the passions of the people. The Bill of Renunciation was said to have been a scheme of Mr. Flood's; but by taking charge of it himself, Lord Temple deprived it of the mischievous *prestige* it might have acquired under such dangerous auspices. The Bill, however, was not Mr. Flood's. Whatever merit, or demerit attaches to it, belongs exclusively to Lord Temple. Lord Northington, overlooking the fact that this Bill was simply a confirmation of the settlement of 1782, and that it really granted nothing new, endeavoured to make it a fulcrum for working further changes and more extensive concessions—not, it may be presumed, without an indirect view to the improvement of his own popularity. The mode in which he thus proposed to carry out Lord Temple's policy provoked the Government, at last, to remonstrate with him. Even Mr. Fox, who could not be suspected of any disinclination to give a patient hearing to Irish demands, seeing the part he had already taken on such questions, felt it necessary to check his exuberant

zeal on behalf of the particular party, whose views and opinions he had so injudiciously adopted. On the 8th of November, he wrote to Lord Northington an admonishing letter upon a variety of points connected with Irish affairs, towards the conclusion of which he observed:

I hope, my dear Northington, you will not consider this long letter as meant to blame your conduct; but I think I owe it as much to my friendship for you as to the public, to give you fairly my opinion and advice in your most arduous situation; and I will fairly own there is one principle which seems to run through your different *despatches*, which a little alarms me: it is this—you seem to think as if it were absolutely necessary at the outset of your Government, to do something that may appear to be obtaining *boons*, however trifling, to Ireland; and what I confess I like still less, is to see that this is, in some degree, grounded upon the ampleness of former concessions. Now I see this in quite a different light, and reason that, because these concessions were so ample, no further ones are necessary. If, because the Duke of Portland gave much, are you to give something? Consider how this reasoning will apply to your successor. I repeat it again, the account must be considered as closed in 1782.*

It may be observed, *en parenthèse*, that the assertion that the Duke of Portland gave much, is a gratuitous assumption. When his Grace came into office, he found the Renunciation Bill passing through its last stages, and he suffered it to pass; but, as Mr. Fox states in this very letter, with the utmost reluctance. The Duke of Portland, in fact, gave nothing. He submitted to the measure of his predecessors because he could not avoid it, and he would have retreated from it if he could.

* Extracted from a letter published in the Life of Mr. Grattan.

No useful result would be gained by a comparison between the intelligible principles and consistency evinced by Lord Temple in his government of Ireland, and the small views and tremulous policy of his successor; but it is something to the purpose of history to note that, while Lord Northington affected to adopt the economical system of Lord Temple, he secretly desired to stultify it, and that so far from being actuated by any sentiment of respect for the government of his predecessor, he suffered the motions of thanks which both Houses of Parliament voted to Lord Temple, when they met in the following October, to pass without a solitary expression of approval on the part of any member of the Administration. These facts are somewhat indignantly stated in a letter addressed to Lord Temple, by Lord Mornington, on the 18th of October, 1783. Respecting the vote of thanks, his Lordship observes:

Government had not the spirit to take a part against the motions of thanks in either House, *but I have every reason to think that they would have done it, if there had been the smallest prospect of success in the attempt.* You must observe that the vote of the House of Commons is much weaker than that of the Lords; Gardiner was obliged, by the interference of Government's friends, to omit several expressions which, if they had been retained, would have rendered the vote more just to your Lordship's Administration, but would have occasioned debate. The fact is, that no compliment to the Act of Renunciation, or even to the framer of it, can be borne with patience by certain supporters of the present Castle.

And in the report of his own speech on this occasion,

which accompanies the letter, Lord Mornington plainly charges the Government with duplicity in reference to Lord Temple's system of economy. Referring to a passage in the Lord-Lieutenant's speech, where his Excellency, in recommending the establishment of the Genevans, reminded Parliament of their duty to "avoid *unnecessary expense*," his Lordship expresses a hope that in "other cases, where all profusion would be dangerous, and where the public safety demanded the most rigid economy, *in the establishments of Government, his Excellency would think it* HIS *duty to avoid all unnecessary expense;*" and then, comparing the recommendation respecting the Genevans with another passage where his Excellency applied for a supply, and in which "his Excellency's economy made no appearance," Lord Mornington goes on to say:

Comparing the two passages of the speech, he [Lord Mornington] was apt to imagine that the expression, "unnecessary expense," was dictated by another spirit, and with other views, than of saving to the public: he suspected that it was meant to insinuate by so special, and seemingly superfluous a recommendation of economy in the further progress of the establishment of the Genevans, that there had been some neglect of economy in the original foundation of the scheme; if that was meant, he called upon the confidential servants of the Castle to avow it; if not, he insisted that they should do justice to the personage who had originally framed this plan, and disclaim his construction of this ambiguous phrase. *He knew what had been the language of the Castle on this subject; he knew how this scheme had been decried; and what a damp had been cast upon the proposers of it*—such a damp, as he had reason to believe, that the settlement had not advanced one step since the

departure of Lord Temple; and he would add, in justice both to the late and present Ministry, that he, in his conscience, believed, if the public were put to any *unnecessary expense* by the settlement, *it must be attributed solely and entirely to the delays and impediments which had been thrown in its way by the present Castle.*

On a subsequent day, moving the thanks of the House to Lord Temple, Lord Mornington delivered an eloquent panegyric upon his Government. He spoke of the Act of Renunciation as having produced an "instantaneous calm in Ireland," and, adverting to other matters, observed:

These were the great public acts of Lord Temple's Government, the nation at large had felt their effects, the Lord-Lieutenant had from the throne applauded them; the House itself had applauded them in detail, and therefore would not object to doing so in the gross, which he now called upon the House to do. With regard to the general attention of Lord Temple to the common duties of his office, and his management of the interior system of government here, he would deliver no opinion of his own; he would appeal to those whose high stations and confidential offices gave them constant access to the person and councils of Lord Temple, to testify his ability and assiduity in business, the extent of his researches, the vigilance with which he penetrated into the secrets of departments where the most gross rapine and peculation had been practised for ages with impunity, *and particularly the firm integrity with which he resisted all jobs, however speciously concealed, or powerfully recommended.*

Nothing need be added to this unimpeachable eulogium on the character of Lord Temple's administration of the Government of Ireland. It comes from an authority

above suspicion, and its statements will guide the decisions of history.

In the midst of these political anxieties there was a private grief, arising out of the sundering of attachments consequent upon the unnatural state of parties, that preyed severely on the sensitive mind of Lord Temple. This painful matter forms the subject of a letter from Lord Temple to his brother, Mr. Thomas Grenville, which has not been inserted in its chronological place, as it would have interrupted the sequence of the preceding correspondence. The tender and affectionate feelings hitherto subsisting unimpaired between the brothers, who, in addition to the rest of their noble qualities, were distinguished beyond most men by their domestic virtues, had been interrupted by one of those fatal divisions in public life, which, during this memorable crisis, separated the closest friends.

The particular occasion which now for the first time produced disunion between Lord Temple and his brother, is not expressly stated in the letter; but it may be surmised from the correspondence which took place early in the preceding year between Mr. Thomas Grenville and Mr. Fox, when the former was employed upon the American negotiation in Paris. Mr. Thomas Grenville, devoting himself to the interests of Mr. Fox, still preserved his allegiance to him under the arrangements of the Coalition Administration; and, from certain expressions in this letter, it would appear that he had ventured to make some overture to Lord Temple, with a view to induce him to reconsider the line of action he had resolved upon, if indeed it did not

amount to the distinct proposal of an office under the new Ministry. The exact nature of that offer is veiled under the language of a poignant and bitter regret, which seeks to avoid details the writer was most unwilling to enter into; but it is sufficiently explicit as to the "new connection" Mr. Thomas Grenville had formed, in an opposite direction to that which Lord Temple's devotion to the principles they held in common had led him to embrace. The sensibility manifested by Lord Temple in reference to this unhappy affair, shows that his heart was as impressionable as his judgment was clear and firm.

LORD TEMPLE TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Phœnix Lodge, May 9th, 1783.

Dear Brother,

Your letter, which mentions one written some time since, came yesterday to my hands; and upon the same day came a monthly account from Coutts, by which I see that, by Welles's neglect, and by the delay of my stewards, I had unknowingly drawn for the expenses of my departure beyond my state; but as it is proper that your wants should be supplied, I have writ to Frogatt, to order him to let you have some £500 from some money of mine in his hands; and I will let you have more as soon as I can.

The remainder of your letter gives me, indeed, the most sensible concern, for it shows me that line broken, which I was still in hopes was only strained; for this is the only interpretation which I can put upon that offer, which (from the most honourable motives) you have made to me; and the only wish which I can now form, is that you may never reflect for

whom, and for what, you have sacrificed that political and intimate connexion, which nature had pointed out, and which till this moment I had not despaired of. One opportunity presented itself in which you could have done me essential service: I never can regret the eagerness with which I entreated from you that proof of affection, because I still feel how much I would have sacrificed, to have preserved our bond inviolate; that, with many other prospects, is now gone, and I am to feel that I have lost that confidence, that goodwill and attachment which you have given to a friendship, which, for obvious reasons, I must ever regret. I do not speak this in resentment and reproach, my feelings are far above them, but in sober and earnest grief of mind. I must remind you that no personal friendship, no party or political consideration, could have guided the steps which I took in June last; to which, in terms the most decisive, you marked your line of separation. The same public principles (for with no one person in England have I correspondence) have decided me in the present moment, and in neither path have we met; and parting upon such a question as that of the present system (upon which I feel everything as a public man, and as a private man have the sensations which naturally result from personal insult), I fear that we have (at least for some time) little chance of seeing those affections vibrate in unison which I feel so strongly strained. Once more let me entreat you (for I am not ashamed to entreat) to reconsider this well. If your new connexion replaces to you that affectionate interest which from my childhood I have borne to you; if your line holds out to you that honourable satisfaction, which I trust you would not have lost by a cordial union of objects and dispositions with me, I fear that I speak in vain; but if you give that play to your reason, to your affection, and to every feeling which Providence has given, as the cement of the tenderest and most

intimate connexions, remember that in offering to you my heart, I mean to offer to you everything which the truest love can give you, but what must and can depend only on the closest union. Weigh this well, and may every good angel guide your decision. Adieu.

Lord Temple must have been the more distressed by the course his brother had taken on this occasion, from the evidences he received of the sanction of other friends, who were governed in their own conduct by his example. These proofs of attachment and approval, while they afforded the most gratifying testimony to the rectitude of his views, touched him deeply in contrast with the alienation of his brother.

Only a few days before he wrote this letter to Mr. Thomas Grenville, we find Lord Bulkeley addressing him in the following terms, alluding to the communication in which Lord Temple had informed him of his determination to resign. "I had great pleasure," observes the writer, "in receiving your last very kind letter, and in learning from yourself the line you meant to take at a critical conjuncture like the present, when the candidates for honour and principle are so reduced in number, that those who forego great situations to bring them forward again, have every title to confidence and support, and deserve every honest and independent encouragement. You may naturally suppose I have not been without solicitations from the Coalition Government; I have given but one answer, which was that I shall certainly act with you, and more especially as

your conduct in resigning gave me, if possible, a greater opinion of and veneration for your character than I could by any means express."

Such testimonies were consolatory in the difficult position in which Lord Temple was placed; but, instead of alleviating the pain he felt at his separation from his brother in public life, they embittered it by the conviction that one whom he loved so sincerely should have adopted a line of action which he in his conscience believed to be erroneous.

It will be observed that in writing to Mr. Thomas Grenville, Lord Temple alludes to a former letter, which evidently had not reached its destination. The circumstance would be unimportant in itself, were there not reason to believe that it formed part of a regular system of *espionnage* to which the whole of Lord Temple's correspondence was subjected. The establishment of such an inquisition into the letters of so high a functionary as the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland seems incredible, and nothing short of the most decisive proofs of the fact could justify even a suspicion of its existence. But there are passages in these letters which leave no doubt whatever that Lord Temple's correspondence, both private and public, was inspected in London while he yet held office in Ireland, and that the same course continued to be carried on after he returned to England. Nor was the *espionnage* limited to mere perusal, frequent allusions to miscarriages leading to the inference that his letters were sometimes suppressed altogether.

There are no means of determining with whom this

system originated. All that appears to be certain is, that it was practised during the period of the Shelburne Cabinet, and followed up under the Coalition; and that after it had been detected, no secret was made about it, either by Lord Temple or his intimate correspondents.

Writing to Colonel Dundas, Lord Temple says, apparently under the apprehension that his letter would be read by others, "Obvious circumstances will prevent my going into the discussion of details in a post letter." And to a friend in Ireland, he speaks still more explicitly: "As almost every letter," he observes, "received or written by me is opened, it is possible that this may undergo that operation in London; and if so, they will learn the real regard I bear to you." Mr. Cuff, writing to Lord Temple, from Dublin, in the November of this year, declares that he expects nothing less than that his letter will be opened and read. The passage is too remarkable to be omitted.

I should not now trouble your Lordship with a letter, but that I find to a certainty, that letters to and from your Lordship are not only opened and read, but many of them are stopped. If this should happen to get into your Lordship's hands, you will see, by what I have written on the outside of it, that I am willing to compromise with those *honourable gentlemen* who open and read your letters, and that I have no objections to their opening and reading, provided they will afterwards forward them to you.

Your Lordship mentions a letter you wrote to me about three or four weeks since, relative to the Genevois and their houses. I have never received a letter from your Lordship since you left Ireland, except one dated the 20th of July, and your last of the

23rd of October. I had the honour to write to your Lordship about the 20th or 25th of September, thanking you for your letter of the 20th of July, and telling you (what I can say with truth) that I prize it more than all my other possessions upon earth. I did not know, when I wrote that letter, that it would be opened and read, else I should have declared my sentiments more freely; but as I am almost certain that this one will be opened, I shall be more full.

Know all men, therefore, by these presents, openers of letters, and others, that I am more attached to your Lordship than to all the rest of the world; not because you gave me a place of £400 a-year at the Barrack Board, but because I think you have more sense, honour, and firmness, than all the Viceroys I have ever seen in Ireland put together.

A month elapsed before Lord Temple answered this letter, unwilling to trust his reply to the post, and waiting all that time for an opportunity to send it by a "safe hand." His explanation of the delay furnishes additional proof of the inquisition to which his correspondence was exposed.

I should long since (he observes) have acknowledged your very kind letter to me, if I had not delayed it partly with the inclination of sending you an answer by a safe hand, and partly from the exceeding anxious state of public business, which has wholly engrossed my attention. It appears from your state[ment] of the letters which you have received, that one, written about the beginning of October, never reached you.

That Lord Temple's letters should have been secretly inspected by a hostile Administration is intelligible, if we

can admit such a proceeding to be consistent with the honour of public men or reconcilable with the obligations of the public service; but it is impossible to comprehend upon what ground of expediency or from what motives of jealousy or distrust, so flagrant a breach of confidence was committed towards him by the subordinates (for it is difficult to believe it could have been officially sanctioned by Ministers themselves) of a Cabinet under which he held so responsible a situation as that of the Vice-royalty of Ireland. The fact, nevertheless, admits of no doubt, and throws a strong light on the sinister means which were adopted in those days for the "management" of the executive.

The share which Lord Temple took in public affairs after his return from Ireland, and during the existence of the Coalition, naturally enough made him a special object of suspicion and resentment to the Cabinet. We find him, in his letter to Mr. Cuff, stating that his attention has been wholly engrossed by the anxious state of public business, and the memoirs of the period show in the results how powerfully he contributed to the overthrow of that ministerial combination, which he had denounced as unnatural and infamous. But the details of his services to the King throughout this harassing crisis have never found their way into history; nor is it now possible, from their secret and confidential nature, to trace them in full. The disclosures, however, which may be gleaned from the few letters that passed to and from Lord Temple at this period, sufficiently prove that the King trusted all along to his counsel and support, and

acted altogether on his advice. There was so much hazard in committing opinions and suggestions to so unsafe a medium as that of correspondence, that we can look but for scanty revelations in the papers which have been preserved. It appears that Lord Temple conducted his proceedings in reference to the struggle between the King and his Ministers chiefly by means of personal interviews and detached memoranda of his views, intended only to assist the memory in conversation, and torn up as soon as used. Lord Thurlow was sometimes employed by his Majesty as an agent on these occasions, and through him, probably to avert suspicion from the real quarter on which his Majesty relied, the intercourse with Lord Temple and his friends was occasionally carried on.

From the commencement to the close of the brief tenure of the Coalition, his Majesty held aloof from his Ministers; and it was not till the opening of the Session, on the 11th of November, that an opportunity was presented for acting effectively upon his determination to get rid of them as soon as he could. During the interval that had elapsed since the prorogation of Parliament in the preceding July, they prepared their measures; but, from the want of co-operation and confidence on the part of the Sovereign, the precise character of their policy was a matter of speculation outside the Cabinet. His Majesty either did not, or would not, know the course they intended to pursue; and it is evident, from subsequent circumstances, that the plan of operations for relieving him of their presence was kept in suspense, waiting upon events, up to the moment when they

brought forward their famous India Bill. The following letter, written a few days before the opening of Parliament, shows how little was known at that moment of the views of Ministers, and enables us to perceive that, although Lord Temple was in frequent communication with the King, he had not yet decided upon the line of conduct to be adopted. The state of affairs implied in the letter is curious enough; exhibiting the Sovereign, on the one side, taking secret counsel of the Opposition, and the Ministry, on the other, coming down to Parliament with measures which they were well aware His Majesty was eagerly watching for a constitutional excuse to thwart and defeat.

LORD TEMPLE TO LORD MORNINGTON.

Stowe, Nov. 6th, 1783.

My dear Lord,

As Stephen Fremantle will deliver this to you, I have not the same difficulties which attend the writing a post letter. I go to town to-morrow, in order to settle our winter arrangements. My first principle will be to throw Ireland out of the book of opposition, unless I am attacked upon it, which I sincerely hope may be the case; although I have but little hopes that by any management in either House, Ministry will be brought to acknowledge the language which their agents uniformly hold upon my subject. Their politics are, I own, inexplicable upon Ireland; they speak the language of high crimination of me, for the concession (which I call no concession) made in the last sessions; they affect to talk loudly and strongly upon all subsequent claims or popular subjects, and to have no fear upon the event of any of those questions; and yet I know that Lord

Northington is frightened, and has uniformly proposed concession on every point *to the fullest extent;* this communication I know directly from the King's mouth, though not to me, but to another person; consequently, it is for your private ear. It is possible that Wyndham, the professed friend to Parliamentary Reform, may have taken his resolution to resign upon that measure being negatived, which we understand certainly to have been decided here. But in all modes of turning it, how is it possible to reconcile a heap of contradictions? I shall see the King upon particular business (no idea of a change) on Friday; and if with propriety I can state anything further upon this, you shall know it. The Portugal business is really all afloat; nor do Ministry see daylight; and I know, from undoubted authority, that France, Spain, and Portugal mean to offer their trade to Ireland upon lower terms, if you will dispense with the Alien Duty, or, in so many words, with the Navigation Act, which, *entre nous,* I fear is no longer binding upon you, as we have partially repealed it in favour of America, and therefore, under Yelverton's Bill, it is now void. This idea, I know, has been proposed to some of your Irish factors, and I have reason to believe that Government know nothing about it. The information which I gave you upon the subject of the Treaties is likewise authentic; it is certain that the commercial system with any of the contracting parties is not advanced nor advancing: so much then for your commercial code. As to the ideas of protecting duties, East India trade, and such, &c., as Ministry affect, and I hope with truth, to hold them cheap; as to the Absentee Tax, I do not hear what they propose; but from many circumstances I should not wonder if they gave way; and if they do, the mortal blow is struck to your landed interest. I wish you would be so good as to inquire privately what became of the prosecutions I had ordered against the Kilkenny Rangers for their riot with Talbot's Fencibles, and against a Mr.

Hetherington, Lieutenant of the Lowtherstown Volunteers, near Inniskillen, for firing with his corps upon a party of the 105th, who came to seize his stills; for I very much suspect that Yelverton (who was very much averse to them) has smuggled them all. I rather think that you must see Grattan in opposition, as I do not see how he can fight under Scott or Fitzgibbon, who have clearly undertaken the House of Commons. If so, the restoration of Lord Carlisle's Administration is singularly perfect in all its parts, except Sheridan, *vice* Lees, which you will agree with me is not quite enough to constitute an essential difference. If the Post-Office gives only one Post-Master you will see Lord Northington completely puzzled, as I have reason to think that the Duke of Leinster and old Mr. Ponsonby have both asked for it. What do you suppose is in contemplation about your Chancellor? I cannot think that Lord Lifford will continue, and yet his terms (to which the Duke of Portland had acceded in July, 1782,) are immoderately high, viz., £2,000 per annum for three lives. When you will recollect that our late Chancellors, though going to the Woolsack from high offices and emoluments, received—Lord Camden £1,500 a year Irish, till a Tellership fell; Lord Bathurst nothing; Lord Thurlow a reversion of a tellership at £3,000 per annum. Compare the pretensions and the rewards!

In this kingdom you will see that there is *de quoi s'amuser* in Parliament: the Funds lower than in war; £30,000,000 still unfunded, consequently £1,500,000, at the least, to be raised of annual taxes, and at least £500,000 or £600,000 additional taxes to make up the deficiencies. Nothing done in Reform, except the creation of new offices, and the whole attention of ministers exclusively turned to the book of Numbers. My brother's fears were that the Opposition might be petulant. With this bill of fare, and that which the foreign questions will furnish, I do not think that we run great risk. Do not answer

the detail of this letter, for it is unsafe; but I wished to take every opportunity to give you good information, and to assure you of the affectionate regard with which I am,

My dear Lord,

Ever yours,

N. T.

The East India Bills were introduced by Mr. Fox, on the 18th of November. The extreme and almost unprecedented principle laid down in these Bills, afforded His Majesty and his private advisers the opportunity of resistance they desired. Had the Opposition themselves framed a measure for Ministers, with the express purpose of widening the distance between the Cabinet and the Sovereign, they could not have devised one better adapted to the purpose. The main object of the East India Bills was to withdraw from the Company the entire administration of the civil and commercial affairs of India, and to vest it in a board of commissioners, who should be nominated by Parliament, and rendered perfectly independent of the Crown. This scheme is said to have been devised by Mr. Burke; but even the paternity of Mr. Burke could not mitigate the odium that was heaped upon it by the Pitt and Grenville party. Mr. Pitt described it as a piece of tyranny that broke through every principle of equity and justice, that took away the security of every company in the kingdom, the Bank, the national creditor and the public corporations, and that left unsafe the great Charter itself, the foundation of all our liberties. It was not merely, however, because it struck at the principle of security so far as public companies and chartered rights

were concerned, that it incurred the strenuous opposition of the King's friends. A more immediate objection was discovered in the blow it aimed at the royal prerogative. The establishment of a commission for the administration of the affairs of India, without concert with the Crown, and whose members were irremovable by the Sovereign, except upon an address from either House of Parliament, was a bold attempt to reduce and narrow the King's influence, which, in the menacing relations then subsisting between the Ministers and the King, could only be regarded as a declaration of open hostility. Upon this ill-considered measure the royal opposition took its stand. But great difficulties were to be encountered before the favourable opportunity thus afforded by the rashness of Ministers could be turned to account.

The Bills passed triumphantly through the Commons, the second reading being carried by a majority of 217 to 103; and on the 9th of December Mr. Fox, attended by a numerous train of members, presented them at the bar of the House of Lords. Here, then, the final battle was to be fought. Lord Temple protested against the measure as "infamous," and as seizing upon "the most inestimable part of the Constitution—our chartered rights;" and was energetically supported by Thurlow, Richmond, and Camden. But as something more than the ordinary parliamentary resistance was necessary to effect the rejection at once of the plan and its authors, Lord Temple obtained permission to make known the sentiments of His Majesty on the subject, in order to give additional weight and authority to the movements of the Opposition. The

proverb which has come down to us from Shakspeare, that the King's name is a tower of strength, was never, perhaps, more effectively illustrated.

According to the version which is given in the accounts hitherto published of these transactions, it was not till the 11th of December, two days after the Bills had been read a first time in the Lords, that His Majesty was apprised of the real character of the measure as it affected his prerogative; and it was then, and not till then, His Majesty determined to resist it. This statement goes to the effect—that on the 11th of December, between the first and second reading, Earl Temple had a conference with the King, in the course of which he fully explained to His Majesty the nature and tendency of a measure which His Majesty had up to that time approved; that he showed His Majesty that he had been "duped" and "deceived," and that His Majesty's indignation at this discovery was excited to such a height as to induce him to authorise the Earl Temple to oppose the Bills in his name. In order to leave no doubt on this point, and to give it all possible force and authenticity, a card was written, setting forth, "That His Majesty allowed Earl Temple to say, that whoever voted for the India Bill was not only not his friend, but would be considered by him as an enemy; and if these words were not strong enough, Earl Temple might use whatever words he might deem stronger and more to the purpose."

This unusual and rather undignified proceeding admits of no other justification than the urgency and exigency of the occasion; and the best thing that can be said

of it is, that it answered the end for which it was designed, although the notoriety which was given to it (and without which it would have been of no avail) produced a fierce resolution in the Commons, carried by an immense majority, declaring that it was a high crime and misdemeanour to report any opinion or pretended opinion of the King upon any proceeding depending in either House of Parliament, with a view to influence the votes of members. It did influence the votes of members very extensively, nevertheless, several proxies which had been entrusted to Ministers having been withdrawn in consequence of the royal interference.

It would appear from this statement, that up to the 11th of December, His Majesty had approved of the India Bills; and that on that day, for the first time, Lord Temple drew His Majesty's attention to the tendency of the measure. Upon the face of the proceedings themselves, such a version of the transaction is so incredible as to excite surprise at its adoption by contemporary historians. A very little reflection must have discovered the impossibility of His Majesty remaining in ignorance of the spirit, aim, and purport of a scheme which had been under discussion for three weeks in the Commons, and had been sifted, explored, and denounced by Pitt, Jenkinson, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Grenville, and others. Nor is it to be believed that, with so strong a motive operating in the minds of His Majesty's personal friends as that which was furnished by the well-known desire of His Majesty to seize upon the first opportunity to make a breach with the Cabinet, Lord Temple and those who acted with him

would have suffered His Majesty to continue in the ignorance ascribed to him—assuming, which it is unreasonable to assume, that His Majesty really was ignorant of the scope and design of a ministerial proposal which had called up remonstrances and protests from all parts of the kingdom.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Lord Temple did not wait until the Bills had reached the House of Lords, to submit to the King his opinion of them; and that he had all throughout earnestly impressed upon His Majesty the objectionable spirit of those clauses that infringed the royal prerogative. This was, indeed, the only vulnerable point upon which His Majesty's direct interference could be properly invoked. The difficulty that had hitherto stood in the way was as to the manner in which the interposition of the King's authority could be brought to bear constitutionally on the measure, during its progress through Parliament. Ministers had an ascertained and decisive majority in the Commons, and Lord Temple seems to have felt that it would have been unwise in His Majesty to have interfered at that stage of the proceedings, when his interference was likely to have failed of the desired effect. The last resource was in the Peers. To have implicated the King's name in the opposition to the measure, while it yet was in the hands of the Commons, would have fatally compromised His Majesty's position; and for that excellent reason, Lord Temple reserved the declaration of His Majesty's opinion for that arena where it was most likely to exercise a practical influence. The moment chosen was just before the debate on the

principle of the Bills. Had His Majesty been advised to preserve his neutrality pending the discussion in the Lords, the probability was, that the measure would have passed that House, and that he would have been ultimately reduced to the necessity of refusing his assent to it; an extremity from which he was delivered by the prompt and novel course recommended by Lord Temple.

Amongst the Grenville papers there is the rough draught of a memorandum, which reveals to us not only the suggestions upon which the King acted in this emergency, but the no less important fact that the line of action was submitted to His Majesty eight days before the Bills had passed the Commons. It it evident from the tone of this memorandum, that the subject matter of it had previously occupied much anxious consideration, that the determination to resist the Bills in some shape was already adopted, and that nothing remained to be settled but the *modus operandi*. It will be seen, that in this memorandum the difficulties attending the royal interference at different stages of the measure are fully designated, and that the mode of proceeding finally adopted by His Majesty is distinctly pointed out. The opening line, and the note at the foot, are in the hand-writing of Lord Temple; the body of the memorandum is in a different and not very legible hand.

Dec. 1st, 1783.

To begin with stating to His Majesty our sentiments upon the extent of the Bill, viz.:

We profess to wish to know whether this Bill appear to His Majesty in this light: a plan to take more than half the royal

power, and by that means disable [the King] for the rest of the reign. There is nothing else in it which ought to call for this interposition.

Whether any means can be thought of, short of changing his Ministers, to avoid this evil.

The refusing the Bill, if it passes the Houses, is a violent means. The changing his Ministers after the last vote of the Commons, in a less degree might be liable to the same sort of construction.

An easier way of changing his Government would be by taking some opportunity of doing it, when, in the progress of it, it shall have received more discountenance than hitherto.

This must be expected to happen in the Lords in a greater degree than can be hoped for in the Commons.

But a sufficient degree of it may not occur in the Lords if those whose duty to His Majesty would excite them to appear are not acquainted with his wishes, and that in a manner which would make it impossible to pretend a doubt of it, in case they were so disposed.

By these means the discountenance might be hoped to raise difficulties so high as to throw it [out], and leave His Majesty at perfect liberty to choose whether he will change them or not.

This is the situation which it is wished His Majesty should find himself in.

Delivered by Lord Thurlow, Dec. 1st, 1783.

NUGENT TEMPLE.

The sequel is matter of history. On the 17th of December, the India Bills were rejected, in the House of Peers, by a majority of 95 to 76. On the 18th, at midnight, a message was transmitted from the King to Lord North and Mr. Fox, commanding them to deliver

up their seals of office; and, in order to mark emphatically the royal displeasure, they were desired to send in their seals by the Under-Secretaries, as a personal interview with them would be "disagreeable" to His Majesty. The next day the rest of the Ministry were dismissed, and the letters conveying their dismissal were signed by Lord Temple.

The circumstances under which this sudden change in the councils of the Sovereign took place, produced considerable alarm in the Commons, by whose support alone —in opposition to the feelings of the King, and the voice of the public—the late Ministry had been sustained in office. An apprehension prevailed amongst the members that the new Cabinet would advise a dissolution, and an Address to the King was accordingly passed on the 22nd, praying His Majesty not to adopt that measure; but Mr. Pitt, to whom the responsibility of constructing an Administration had been confided in the meanwhile, entertained no such project, having resolved to trust in the first instance to his strength out of doors; and His Majesty's answer to the address explicitly assured the Commons, accordingly, that he had no intention of exercising his prerogative either to prorogue or dissolve Parliament.

For three days Lord Temple held the Seals, to facilitate Mr. Pitt's negotiations; and shortly afterwards the new Government was announced, with Mr. Pitt at its head, Lord Howe at the Admiralty, Lord Thurlow as Lord Chancellor, and the Marquis of Carmarthen and Lord Sydney in the Foreign and Home Departments. The Duke of Rutland, who for a short time held the office of

Lord Privy Seal (in which he was succeeded by Lord Gower), was sent to Ireland to succeed Lord Northington early in the ensuing year.

Up to this time, notwithstanding the signal services he had rendered to the Sovereign throughout a period marked by the most extraordinary contest in our annals between the Crown and a dominant party in the Commons, Lord Temple had waited in vain for that acknowledgment of his conduct in Ireland to which he felt himself entitled. The position of the King during the conflict that had been forced upon him with his Ministers was, doubtless, no less embarrassing than painful; but now that Mr. Pitt had succeeded to office, Lord Temple expected full justice would be done to him. That he did not receive it, however, and that his proud and sensitive temper resented the neglect, will be evident from the following letter, which closes the correspondence for the year.

LORD TEMPLE TO MR. PITT.

Stowe, Dec. 29th, Half-past One.

Dear Sir,

I am sorry that you should have had the trouble of acknowledging at so late a period a letter which was indeed very interesting to me, but to which I have not even expected any answer for the last eight weeks; and I perfectly agree with you, "that it would be of little use to enter in[to] particulars" respecting the considerations so immediately affecting my credit, a[nd?] honour, which we certainly view so differently. If any communication had been wished for from me upon these points, upon which it was known by Mr. Grenville and by you that I was not indifferent, I should have thought it my

duty of friendship to have stated my reasons for being confident that the new Irish arrangements cannot be useful, upon the same principles as have been thought (by you) sufficient to bury former distinctions of party in this country: I have already stated to you my reasons for considering the recal of Mr. Ponsonby and of his friends to power and confidence in Ireland as a most dangerous measure, and as a departure from a system to which His Majesty's Government was pledged, not only with your approbation, but with your strong and decided opinion. I have likewise stated the reasons why I consider such a measure, unaccompanied with any mark to me of the King's approbation of my conduct, as the strongest disavowal of my Government in Ireland, and (not to use harsh expressions) as the most personal offence to me. In that point of view I know that it has been almost universally considered in Ireland; because the natural intemperance of those to whom I feel myself sacrificed has not been controlled by any proof of the interest which it had been supposed you would have felt naturally in whatever so nearly concerned me. And with these impressions, I felt strongly the kindness of my brother, Mr. Grenville, who endeavoured to calm those feelings, and to suggest various marks of favour (if you should approve them) which did not appear to him precluded by any difficulties of which he was aware.

And by that kindness I was induced to acquiesce in his wish to be permitted to open to you an idea which I find that Mr. Grenville and you consider (in part of it) as strongly objectionable, as hazardous to Government, and as unwise on my part. As I cannot think of accepting the peerage for my second son under such circumstances, I have only to express my regrets that the idea ever has been opened to you. I was never very particularly attached to it, and certainly feel the full force of your arguments against it; but I likewise feel as fully that the arrangements which you have taken, with your

eyes open to the consequences (as far as I am concerned in the question), leave me without alternative. I need not add that the consequences of this must be most painful to me from reflections embittered by the warm affection I bore to those who view all this so differently from me.

I have, from attention to you, sent back your messenger immediately. I have, therefore, hardly had time to consider the expressions of this letter. I shall, therefore, thank you if (notwithstanding your press of business) you will, from recollection of former habits, be kind enough to give me one line, to tell me whether I have made myself understood or not; and you will likewise think it necessary to give me some answer respecting your *engagement* to Mr. Gamon, in August last, to include him in the *first list* of Baronets. If you wish for a copy of your letter on that subject, you shall have it, but an immediate explanation to him from you, as well as me, is absolutely necessary.

I am, with very sincere regrets, and with the deepest sensations of pain for what has passed, and for what is yet to come,

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient and humble servant,

N. T.

1784.

MR. PITT'S ADMINISTRATION—LORD TEMPLE CREATED MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM—HIS PRIVATE NOTES ON THE COALITION.

THE relative position of parties at the opening of 1784 was singular and unprecedented. The exultation of the public on the dismissal of the late Ministers, and the accession of Mr. Pitt to power, afforded the undeniable proof that the people were with the Sovereign and his advisers. Addresses of thanks and congratulation poured in from the municipal and corporate bodies in all parts of the kingdom, who felt their privileges endangered by the East India Bills, expressing the gratitude of the country to His Majesty for the vigour and resolution with which he had acted. The Coalition, nevertheless, still wielded a powerful majority in the Commons, with which they continued to harass the Cabinet, in spite of those demonstrations of public opinion which plainly warned them that, long as they might succeed in protracting the struggle, it could end only in disaster and defeat. The King and the Cabinet were, in short, brought into open hostility with the Commons by the persevering resistance of that

unnatural and unprincipled combination which, stung by recent failure and disgrace, now manifested greater virulence than ever. Two days after the reassembling of Parliament, in January, Mr. Pitt introduced his India Bill. It was immediately rejected by the Commons. This was his first defeat. Every subsequent movement of the Government was frustrated in the same way. All the resources of parliamentary tactics were resorted to for the purpose of dislodging the Minister. Resolutions were passed declaring that the late changes were not calculated to conciliate the House, and that the continuance in office of the new Ministers was injurious to the interests of both King and people; and, finding that these resolutions failed of the desired effect, more violent measures were adopted. The Mutiny Bill was postponed, and the appropriation of the supplies was suspended.

In this desperate state of affairs, it appeared to be absolutely impossible to carry on the business of the country; and, driven to the last extremity, negotiations were opened with the Duke of Portland, in the hope of appeasing the Opposition, and strengthening the hands of Government. But the Duke of Portland made demands which were incompatible with the dignity of the Minister, and which only tended to increase the difficulty of the situation. It is believed that he went so far as to stipulate for Mr. Pitt's resignation. Mr. Pitt, however, refused to resign, and the negotiation was broken off. Throughout the whole of this contest, Mr. Pitt maintained an attitude of firmness, and displayed an amount of ability which greatly increased his popularity. The

Opposition, powerful as it was, finally gave way under his undaunted spirit, their numbers daily diminishing as the inutility of perseverance became more and more evident, until at length he reduced the majority against him to one on a vote of confidence. At this point the Coalition vanished. It was not, however, till the month of March that he succeeded in crushing his formidable opponents; and having thus demonstrated the real strength of his Government by the most constitutional means, he dissolved the Parliament—an alternative which a less confident and conscientious Minister might have justifiably availed himself of long before. The appeal to the people was enthusiastically responded to; and when the next Parliament met, an amendment on the Address, moved by Lord Surrey, was rejected by a majority of 76. Mr. Pitt's Government was now established on the firmest basis.

Throughout these proceedings, Lord Temple maintained a strict reserve. Except when his opinions were solicited on the subject of Ireland, he does not appear to have tendered his advice, or in any form to have identified himself with the Government. His regard for Mr. Pitt isolated him from a prominent participation in public affairs at this crisis; for as he would not act against the Administration, and was precluded from the opportunity of serving it as he desired to do, no choice was left to him but that of a friendly neutrality. He still continued, notwithstanding, to feel a deep interest in Irish affairs; but it was limited almost exclusively to his private letters, and even in this shape he abstained from all direct interference. Lord Northington, who is said to have been

invited by Mr. Pitt to retain the Lord-Lieutenancy, remained in office till February, when he was displaced by the Duke of Rutland. In the interval, Lord Temple's silence on all matters relating to the government of that country, has left scarcely any traces of his feelings or opinions in the scanty correspondence of this period.

On the 8th of January, writing to General Cuninghame, whom he had formerly recommended to the command in Ireland for his "superior fitness," and who had recently applied for it on the resignation of General Burgoyne, he intimates his position very clearly:

Variety of circumstances have placed me in a situation wholly divested of power or of official information; so that in the present moment I do not even know whether General Burgoyne is still in command or not; still less do I know the ideas of Government upon it.

General Cuninghame, in reply, expresses the regret which he felt, in common with others, that his Lordship, who had occupied so conspicuous a place in the favour of the King during the late ministerial crisis, had relinquished the power which His Majesty had invested him with.

For a thousand reasons, public and private, I am sorry you found yourself under the necessity of resigning the Seals, and for the same thousand reasons I hope your Lordship will soon again accept of office.

The resignation of the Seals, here alluded to, was a step Lord Temple felt himself called upon to take by a nice and

punctilious sense of honour; but which, upon a broader view of the exigencies of the public service, and the peculiar demands of the occasion, could not have been considered imperative. It had reference to the resolution of the Commons, impugning as a high crime and misdemeanour the circulation of the opinions of the King, with a view to influence the decision of Parliament. That resolution was avowedly pointed at Lord Temple; and in order that he might be enabled, without embarrassing the Sovereign or the Government, to meet any subsequent action which the Commons might think fit to found upon it, Lord Temple resigned. His chivalry, however, was a mere waste of that generous self-abnegation which characterized his whole public life. The Commons never proceeded any farther in the matter.

In another letter to General Cuninghame, dated 1st of March, Lord Temple expresses his regret that his recommendation of that officer to His Majesty had not the effect he desired, and again assures him that he possesses no power or influence with the Administration.

I am favoured with your letter upon General Pitt's appointment. I need not repeat that if I had continued in Ireland, I should have shown every attention to your wishes. In my present situation I neither have been nor can be consulted in official arrangements. My warm affection and near relationship towards the Duke of Rutland and Mr. Pitt have disposed me to give them the best advice which my experience in Ireland could suggest to me; and in the course of these communications, your pretensions to the command were stated with every advantage.

General Cuninghame replies by declaring that he considers himself very ill-used, after having supported the British Government in Ireland for thirty-three years in Parliament; but adds: "Why should I complain to my benefactor, who has it not in his power to relieve me?"

Amongst the Irish correspondents who continued to look up to Lord Temple as the statesman who best understood the circumstances and wants of the country, was Colonel Martin, the owner of the vast estates of Connemara, who afterwards acquired a special reputation in the Imperial Parliament, by his Bill for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. At the period when he was in correspondence with Lord Temple, the humanity for which he was subsequently distinguished did not, it is said, extend to his own species; for no man, in a land notorious for feudal violence, enjoyed a wider celebrity as a duellist. From a letter written in the July of this year, the following extract may be inserted, as being strikingly characteristic both of the writer and the state of society over which, in those belligerent days, men of such grave temperaments as the Grenvilles were called upon to preside.

You have perhaps heard already of my affair at Castlebar with Mr. Fitzgerald. On the 14th I went to Castlebar, where with some difficulty and after the use of language not very consonant to my feelings, I prevailed on Mr. Fitzgerald to meet me in the barrack-yard. When I took my first ground, I was distant about eight yards from him, but on his declaring in a vaunting manner that we were not near enough, I told him he should not have reason to complain on that head, and accordingly I advanced within less than five yards to him, and

said he had it in his power to make it much nearer. We both fired about the same time; he missed me, but my shot entered his waistcoat and passed along his breast and grazed his arm. He then called to me not to fire again until he recovered his pistol, on which I declared I would wait any time he chose. When he was ready, we fired as before; my shot hit him just above the waistband of his breeches and got out on the opposite side of his waistcoat. I was wounded in the breast, but very slightly; and I am at present so well as to be able to travel anywhere in my carriage.

Mr. Fitzgerald shows his clothes to every person, but declares he is not wounded; for my part, I will not declare my reasons for believing him to be unhurt. On the ground he declared himself sorry for the offence, and that he was *wounded*. For the last I declared my sorrow, so everything ended.

Although Lord Temple throughout this year, as he observes in one of his letters, "lived too little in the political world" to evince much interest in its vicissitudes, the honours which his official career had so well earned followed him into private life. Towards the close of 1784, he was created Marquis of Buckingham.

In his retirement, however, he was not an inattentive observer of public affairs, and seems to have contemplated the design of drawing up an account of that memorable struggle of parties of which he had been a witness, and especially of the transactions in which he had been directly and personally concerned. That he did not carry this design into execution, and that nothing remains of it but the following fragment, is much to be regretted, as few men were so well qualified by experience, knowledge and ability, to become the historian of these events. The

fragment, for it is nothing more, breaking off at the most interesting point of the narrative, which it was evidently the writer's intention to pursue to the close, is printed with the title, and exactly in the form in which it was left by Lord Temple. It is hardly necessary to remark that there is an error in the date, which has reference to the months of November and December, 1783, and not 1784, a mistake which probably arose from the circumstance of these notes having been put together in the latter year.

LORD BUCKINGHAM'S PRIVATE NOTES.

I have much lamented that, during the very interesting period of November and December, of 1784, I did not keep a regular journal of the transactions of those months, in which I am supposed to have borne so principal a share. Many of the minuter springs which guided those operations have slipped my memory, from the multiplicity of them, and from the rapidity with which they crowded upon each other during the latter busy days, ending with the formation of the new Ministry on the 21st of December, 1784. It will, however, be necessary for me to take this narrative from an earlier period, necessarily connected with it—I mean the formation of the Government known by the name of the Coalition Ministry.

I was in Ireland during that period, and was not uninformed, authentically, of the disposition on the part of Lord North to have supported the Ministry of Lord Shelburne upon terms of provision for his friends, very short of those which he afterwards claimed and extorted from Mr. Fox. It was clearly known to Lord Shelburne, that no official arrangement was proposed by Lord North for himself; and, to say truth, those of his friends for whom he wished provision to be made, were

at least as unexceptionable as many, I may even add as most, of those whom Lord Shelburne had collected from the two former Administrations. The infatuation, however, which pervaded the whole of his Government, operated most forcibly in this instance. The affectation of holding the ostensible language of Mr. Pitt, in 1759, is only mentioned to show the ridiculous vanity of the Minister who, unsupported by public success, or by the parliamentary knowledge and manœuvre of a Duke of Newcastle, not only held it, but acted upon it, professing, in his own words, to "know nothing of the management of a House of Commons, and to throw himself upon the people alone for support." This farce operated as it might be expected; and although the negotiation between Lord North and Mr. Fox was matter of perfect notoriety for several weeks, those moments were suffered to pass away without any attempt to avail himself of the various difficulties which presented themselves, at the different periods of that discussion, till, at the very eve of the ratification of it, Mr. Pitt was employed by his Lordship to open propositions, through Mr. Fox, to that party. This was rejected *in toto;* and the events which followed the meeting of Parliament, are too well known to make a detail of them necessary.

Before I proceed I wish to add, that although I have treated the vanity and personal arrogance of Lord Shelburne as it deserves, yet I will do him justice in acknowledging his merit, as one of the quickest and most indefatigable Ministers that this country ever saw. Many of his public measures were the result of a great and an informed mind, assisted by a firm and manly vigour. And I must ever think the Peace, attended with all its collateral considerations, the most meritorious and happiest event for a kingdom exhausted of men and of credit. I was not pledged in the slightest degree to the measure; for, by my absence in Ireland, and my little connection with his Lordship, I was enabled to judge of it with coolness and

impartiality; and from the knowledge of the various difficulties attending it, I am convinced that better terms could not be obtained, and that the further prosecution of the war was impracticable, even if the combination against us allowed the hope of success. This testimony I have wished to bear, though it is not immediately connected with my purpose.

Upon the resignation of Lord Shelburne, His Majesty was placed in a situation in which, through the various events of his reign, he never had yet found himself. The manœuvres which he tried, at different periods of the six weeks during which this country was left literally without a Government, are well known. Perhaps nothing can paint the situation of his mind so truly, as a letter which he wrote to me on the 1st of April: this was an answer to one which I thought it necessary to address to him from Ireland, after receiving from him a message and a general detail of his situation, through Mr. W. Grenville, to whom he opened himself very confidentially upon the general state of the kingdom.

Upon my return to England, I was honoured with every public attention from His Majesty, who ostensibly held a language upon my subject, calculated to raise in the strongest degree the jealousy of his servants. In the audience which I asked, as a matter of course, after being presented at his levée, he recapitulated all the transactions of that period, with the strongest encomium upon Mr. Pitt, and with much apparent acrimony hinted at Lord Shelburne, whom he stated to have abandoned a situation which was tenable, and particularly so after the popular resentment had been roused. This was naturally attended with strong expressions of resentment and disgust of his Ministers, and of personal abhorrence of Lord North, whom he charged with treachery and ingratitude of the blackest nature. He repeated that, to such a Ministry he never would give his confidence, and that he would take the first moment for dismissing them. He then stated the propo-

sition made to him by the Duke of Portland, for the annual allowance of £100,000 to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. I gave to him, very much at length, my opinion of such a measure, and of the certain consequences of it: in all which, as may reasonably be supposed, His Majesty ran before me, and stated with strong disgust the manner in which it was opened to him—as a thing *decided*, and even drawn up in the shape of a message, to which his signature was desired as a matter of course, to be brought before Parliament the next day. His Majesty declared himself to be decided to resist this attempt, and to push the consequences to their full extent, and to try the spirit of the Parliament and of the people upon it. I thought it my duty to offer to him my humble advice to go on with his Ministers, if possible, in order to throw upon them the ratification of the Peace, which they professed to intend to ameliorate, and to give them scope for those mountains of reform, which would inevitably come very short of the expectations of the public. From these public measures, and from their probable dissension, I thought that His Majesty might look forward to a change of his Ministers in the autumn; and that, as the last resource, a dissolution of this Parliament, chosen by Lord North and occasionally filled by Mr. Fox, might offer him the means of getting rid of the chains which pressed upon him. To all this he assented; but declared his intention to resist, at all events and hazards, the proposition for this enormous allowance to His Royal Highness, of whose conduct he spoke with much dissatisfaction. He asked, what he might look to if upon this refusal the Ministry should resign: and I observed, that, not having had the opportunity of consulting my friends, I could only answer that their resignation was a proposition widely differing from their dismissal, and that I did not see the impossibility of accepting his Administration in such a contingency, provided the supplies and public bills were passed, so as to enable us to prorogue the

Parliament. To all this he assented, and declared his intention of endeavouring to gain time, that the business of Parliament might go on; and agreed with me that such a resignation was improbable, and that it would be advisable not to dismiss them, unless some very particular opportunity presented itself.

1785.

THE BREACH BETWEEN THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM AND MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Mr. Pitt's Government was now reaping all the advantages of peace and security. The lull that followed the termination of the American War and the dispersion of the Coalition, enabled the Minister to consolidate his power and develop his plans. Lord North, who had the misfortune not long afterwards to lose his eyesight, was receding from the arena on which he had acted so remarkable a part during the preceding fourteen years; and Mr. Fox and his adherents, returning again to their own natural orbit, were vindicating their integrity and consistency in the maintenance of a constitutional Opposition. Faction, weakened and dismembered, had fallen before the genius of Mr. Pitt.

The principal measure in the Cabinet in 1785 was a Bill for the reform of the representation in Parliament, by which Mr. Pitt proposed to transfer the franchises of thirty-six boroughs to counties and unrepresented towns. A clause in this Bill, for giving pecuniary compensation

to the disfranchised boroughs, was fatal to its reception. Mr. Fox laid down the maxim, that the franchise was not a property, but a trust: the House adopted that view of the question, and the Bill was lost. But Mr. Pitt, nevertheless, discharged his pledge to the public by thus initiating the principle of parliamentary reform.

The Marquis of Buckingham still continued a passive spectator of public events, and the correspondence of this period possesses consequently little political interest. We learn by a letter from his brother, Mr. W. W. Grenville, that he had placed his proxy in the hands of Lord Camelford, who was so embarrassed by the responsibility, that he took counsel with Lord Sydney and Mr. Grenville as to the course he should follow in reference to a particular vote. Mr. Grenville, exercising his usual good sense and practical judgment, strongly recommended his Lordship to withdraw his proxy altogether, rather than to have it exposed to the chance of compromising his opinions.

The unhappy difference between the Marquis of Buckingham and his brother, Mr. Thomas Grenville, was not yet adjusted; and time seems only to have widened a breach which both deplored, and were equally anxious to remove. The proud feelings of the Marquis, wounded by the injustice with which he conceived he had been treated, were peculiarly sensitive to every act on the part of his friends that departed in the slightest degree from the line he had marked out for himself. Perhaps he expected from them more in this respect than the obligations of public life could be reasonably expected

to concede; in this instance, at least, he appears to have exaggerated into a personal wrong a vote which was given on pure and independent grounds, without a suspicion that it was open to so injurious an interpretation. Mr. Thomas Grenville's letter on this painful subject is an honourable testimony alike to his integrity and his affection.

MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

St. James's Street, Feb. 4th, 1785.

My dear Brother,

Anything that comes from you with the least prospect of bringing back to me those sentiments of affection which, in spite of any political differences, it has always been my first wish to keep alive between us; any intimation of your looking for a brother in one who has never ceased to be so to you; I cannot but be eager to express the pleasure and satisfaction I feel in receiving from you. And if I did not feel shocked and wounded by those expressions which ascribe to my vote motives so foreign to my nature, that I can scarce bear to read or repeat them, my hopes of living with you in the affectionate intercourse of a brother would have kept my attention to that pleasing prospect only, and would have shut my lips upon every past subject of difference. Can I really have to think that you are serious in considering me as having struck at your honour and your life by any vote that I have given? That such an expression can have come from you after a year's reflection, wounds me more than anything that could be said in the first moments of anger; and it is not against such a charge that I can argue to defend myself.

I cannot say with how much concern it is, that I have felt myself obliged to allude to anything that has passed, nor could

I have been forced now to do it, was it not that to have said nothing upon a charge so cruel might have looked like acquiescing in the justice of it: of that vote I have always said, and God knows, always truly said, that I made in it no personal attack, felt in it nothing hostile to you, and regretted in it only the misrepresentation and misconception of others. I have said more, and still say, that the misunderstanding of that vote is so grievous to me, that, blameless as my motives were, I would not have given it, if I had thought it liable to the misrepresentations that have been made of it; yet, God knows, I thought it could be mistaken only by those who did not know me.

I return with pleasure, my dear brother, to that part of your note, in which I hope I find again the prospect of that near affectionate relation, the renewal of which on your part, my mind has ever been anxious for, and ever eager to bring about, from the first moment that political differences had separated us; for, upon political subjects, my mind receives no impression that can stop in it the feelings of relationship, kindness, and affection, all of which I will hope, my dearest brother, the latter words of your note again open the way to—a way in which I cannot too often repeat, how gladly and happily I should go forward in.

Ever your very affectionate brother,

THOMAS GRENVILLE.

The following passage, in the Marquis of Buckingham's hand-writing, apparently cut out of a former letter to which the above is the reply, seems to contain the observations from which Mr. Thomas Grenville extracted the hope of reconciliation. It is enclosed in his letter as if it had been returned to the writer.

When you joined in the vote which impeached my honour, and possibly my life, you forgot the feelings of a brother, and dissolved the ties between us. I loathe the looking back, still less do I mean to reproach: my heart is still alive to those feelings which nature and religion dictate to me.

I have no false pride, and, therefore, have no conditions to propose to you. All that I look for is a *brother;* but in that word I comprehend all the sentiments of affection which I feel I discharged faithfully towards you till the moment of our separation. Consult your feelings, and God direct them.

In the next letter, Mr. W. W. Grenville communicates a scrap of political gossip to his brother.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oakley, Sunday, August 9th, 1785.

My dear Brother,

Having just heard a most curious piece of news, I take the first moment of acquainting you with it, though, perhaps, you will have been informed of it through some other channel. It is no less than a sudden resolution taken by Wyndham of resigning his office, in consequence of an inflammatory fever with which he was seized at Oxford, on his way back to Dublin. Lord Northington's friends in London have undertaken very kindly to supply his loss, and have offered his secretaryship to Tom Pelham, who has accepted, and waits only for the form of being appointed by Lord Northington to the situation of his confidential Minister and friend.

Their Irish peers are Clements, Matthew, Jonson, Pomeroy, and Mr. Hutchinson; together with Deland, Pennant, and Pennington.

The wags say that this is the second voyage to the North

Pole, in which Wyndham has stopped short. I own I think he has used his principal very ill, and himself not very well. The other's accepting is not much less extraordinary.

I should not be quite surprised if Lord Northington should follow his quondam Secretary's example. At any rate, conceive the confusion in which the country must now be, with the harvest, the election, and nothing like a Government; the Secretary not appointed, and the Lord-Lieutenant doing business *on Thursdays, from twelve till two*.

You see Hussy Burgh is not in the list. Should not you write him an ostensible letter on the subject?

I shall go to town in a day or two at furthest, and will write to you from thence.

Adieu, my dear brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

1786.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE JOINS MR. PITT'S ADMINISTRATION.

WHILE the Marquis of Buckingham abstained from active participation in public business, he maintained the most friendly relations with Mr. Pitt, warmly supporting the Minister in all matters upon which his individual adhesion, advice, and local influence could add strength and character to his Administration. That he persevered, however, in cultivating the retirement he had chosen, in preference to throwing himself personally into the ocean of action, may be inferred from the following letter, which announces the accession of Mr. Grenville to the Government as Vice-President of the Committee of Trade.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, August 10th, 1786.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I said nothing to you in my last about going to Court, because, as everybody in town had gone on Friday, I did not think it material for you to come up, considering your distance;

and I was unwilling to advise your putting yourself to any inconvenience of that sort, which did not appear to be absolutely necessary.

But yesterday's levée was fuller than Friday's, and crowded with all sorts of people, particularly the Opposition, who came from all quarters of the kingdom. This being the case, I cannot help thinking that you would do right to come up for the next levée, which is Friday next; the King keeping the Duke of York's birthday on Wednesday, at Windsor. I mentioned the subject to-day to Pitt, who seemed to think it very desirable that you should do this, as a mark of attention, in return for the many civilities which we have lately received from that quarter. As several places have addressed on the occasion, I think if you would bring up an address from the loyal corporation of Buckingham, it would be a sort of apology for your absence hitherto.

The Committee of Trade is to be declared that day in council. Lord Hawkesbury is to kiss hands as President, and your humble servant as Vice-President. Lord Hawkesbury also kisses hands for the Duchy, and Lord Clarendon for the Post-Office, in the room of Lord Tankerville, who goes out upon a sort of quarrel between him and Lord Cartaret. Mornington kisses hands to-morrow for the Treasury.

I believe these are all the arrangements that will now be made. The seat on the Bench is not yet disposed of, and from what I judged by the Chancellor's looks the other day, when I saw him at council, I very much fear that a more extensive law arrangement will soon be necessary. Lord Mansfield is also said to be worse again.

Adieu, my dear brother,

Believe me ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

That the weight of Lord Buckingham's opinions was strongly felt in the nomination of Mr. Grenville and others to office, is abundantly testified by a letter of the same date, in which Lord Mornington ascribes to the favourable recommendations of the Marquis his seat at the Treasury.

LORD MORNINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

August 10th, 1786.

My dear Lord,

I trouble you with this letter to inform you that Pitt has offered me the vacant seat at the Board of Treasury, and that I have accepted it: nothing could be more flattering or kind than the manner in which this offer was made; I will trouble you with the circumstances which attended it when I have the pleasure of seeing you. William Grenville's friendship has been exerted with its usual warmth and sincerity on this occasion; and I feel so strongly the effect of your former activity in my favour, that although your absence from town has prevented my applying to you on this occasion, yet I must attribute this, as I shall any future success, to the ground which you laid for me, and to the uniform assiduity with which you have supported my pretensions: therefore, although you have had no immediate concern (that I know) in this specific object, I must beg of you to accept a very large share of the gratitude which I feel to those who have promoted it for me. The Vice-Treasurerships, as I suppose you know, do not go to Ireland.

I hope to have the pleasure of paying my duty to you at Stowe, in the autumn; perhaps I may have the good fortune to see you sooner in town, as I hear that you are coming up

with a loyal address. I beg my best compliments to Lady Buckingham.

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Ever most sincerely your obliged and affectionate

MORNINGTON.

The "object," dimly and cautiously alluded to in the annexed letters, was that of a peerage, to which the high pretensions of Mr. W. W. Grenville justified him in looking forward; but which his prudence, holding his honourable ambition in check, made him desirous of postponing until he had won even greater distinction as a statesman than he had already attained.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Thursday, Dec. 12th, 1786.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You do not say a word in your letter of Apsley and his deer.

Sir William Bowyers' man has declined the clerkship for himself, and has no son old enough for it. I have a very handsome letter from Mulgrave, leaving the Wardrobe Keeper to my disposal. On inquiry, it appears to be worth at least £100 per annum, besides apartments in Chelsea, and coals and candles. But residence is absolutely necessary.

You will therefore judge what to do with it; but the Clerk's place must be filled up without further delay. I have allowed the widow of the Wardrobe Keeper to remain in the office till March, but if you decide on the man, I can, in order to prevent accidents, appoint him now to take possession in March. I mention this the rather as I fear that, to my great sorrow, I am going to have a new colleague, which I will explain to you in ten days,

by which time I hope to be at Stowe. It gives me very real concern, because it is impossible for any man to have behaved in a more gentleman-like and friendly manner than Mulgrave has done on every occasion; and I fear his successor will have *a clan* upon him, but that is not settled.

You know my *principal* object: should I press to have it opened for me now? If I did, I believe it would be done; but I am so much pleased with my present situation, that I am unwilling to quit it so soon, especially as every year removes difficulties in the way of the other. Yet, perhaps, it is not prudent to let opportunities pass by one. On the other hand, I shall, I am confident, be able in the next session, by the help of my present situation, to put myself much more forward in the House than I have hitherto done, which appears to me a great object to attain, previous to accepting of what after all, I fear, will wear the appearance of putting myself *hors de combat.*

I am not in the same mind about it for any ten minutes together. Pray write something to me by the return of the post.

I am much grieved to hear so unpleasant an account of Lady Buckingham, but earnestly hope that what she goes through will be confined to suffering only, and that you will not be disappointed in an object so interesting to you both.

Nothing is yet known of law enactments, nor is it by any means certain that Lord Mansfield resigns during his life, which is, however, in all probability, no very long period.

Fawcitt will have the red riband with another person, who will surprise you.

What should you think of an arrangement to be settled now, and to take place at the opening of the session of 1788? The worst is, it would be known, which would be unpleasant to me in a thousand ways. I never had a point to decide which puzzled me so much. That very circumstance will probably make me

pass it, as if I take any step, I must do it within a day or two at furthest. Pray write to me.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

If it is done in the manner I last mentioned, you must understand that it will be irrevocably fixed, as a positive engagement will be taken for my present office to be given at that time; so that if I alter my mind in 1788, I shall be an independent country gentleman.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Dec. 21st, 1786.

My dear Brother,

I have nothing decisive to say to you on the subject which we discussed so much at Stowe, except that the particular arrangement, which we agreed to be in so many respects objectionable, certainly will not take place. My opinion is, that it will end in my remaining as I am till *the other event* happens, when it will be time enough to decide the question, which will then occur, either of my present situation continuing, or of the arrangement which you suggested instead of it, which I mentioned to Pitt, and which he seemed in many respects to like. The negotiation with respect to that *other event* has not yet been opened, but will immediately be so. The period must depend upon that person's wishes as well as mine; but mine, as far as they will have weight, are for the time which you seemed to prefer.

I do not know whether you will understand my hieroglyphics, but I hope to explain them to you some time next week, as Lord Harcourt and myself have, I think, nearly settled to take our holidays then.

We determined nothing about the Wardrobe Keeper. Lord

Grimstone has been written to about Hepburne's arrangement, but we have no answer yet. This need not, however, delay any decision which you may take about the other, which I am very anxious to settle before the clannism takes place,

Adieu, my dear brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

1787.

THE DAWN OF FREE TRADE—THE ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES—AFFAIRS OF HOLLAND—ARTHUR WELLESLEY—THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM ASSUMES THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND FOR THE SECOND TIME.

Looking back upon the acts of past administrations, with a view to the influence they exercised over the policy of their successors to the present time, perhaps the most important measure introduced at this period by Mr. Pitt was a commercial treaty with France, which may be regarded as the first recognition by an English Minister of the principles of Free Trade. Mr. Fox maintained that France was the natural enemy of England, and that it was useless to attempt to veil the rivalry of the two countries under commercial regulations. Mr. Pitt, on the other hand, urged that it was their mutual interest to liberate their commerce; and that if France obtained a market by this treaty of eight millions of people for her wines and other productions, England profited still more largely by gaining a market for her manufactures of twenty-four millions.

The general principle of this treaty was to admit a

mutual exportation and importation of commodities, at a low *ad valorem* duty. The Opposition made great head against it in the House of Commons, but it was finally carried by a majority of 76. Curiously enough, the treaty was negotiated by Mr. Eden, who had held the office of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland under the Coalition, and who was the first person to break away from that heterogeneous confederacy, and ally himself with Mr. Pitt. His defection was the more memorable from the fact, that the Coalition is said to have originated with him; at all events, he divides the credit of the project with Mr. Burke. Distinguished by his zeal and activity, Mr. Eden was soon afterwards raised to the peerage, under the title of Baron Auckland.

While this reciprocity treaty was in progress, the finances of France were reduced to such a state of derangement by a system of corruption and profligate expenditure, as to call for some strong and universal measure of redemption. The famous Convention of Notables was the remedial project suggested by that able but speculative financier, M. de Calonne, who had succeeded M. Necker as Minister of Finance. This assembly, by royal authority, of all the considerable persons in the kingdom, excited some curiosity in England. What was thought of it in the ministerial circles may be gathered from a passage in a letter from Mr. W. W. Grenville to Lord Buckingham, dated the 8th of January.

A resolution has been taken by the French Government, and declared by the King in his council, which occasions a good deal of speculation. It is no less than the calling an Assemblée

generale, who are to consist of archbishops, bishops, nobles, and deputies from the different parliaments, &c., to the number of one hundred and fifty-nine. They are to meet at Versailles, I think in the course of next month. It is not yet declared what is to be proposed to them. But I think it probable that they will be to deliberate on two great plans which the Government have in contemplation; one for abolishing all the internal custom-houses, and the other for reducing all the import duties universally to duties from 12 per cent to ¼ per cent, *ad valorem* according to certain classes. Besides this, it is probable that the state of their finances is such as to require very strong measures, both to provide for the existing debt, and to make up any deficiencies arising from either of these plans, and that Calonne thinks that he will be safer in obtaining the sanction of such an Assembly as this. His friends give out, that it is at his earnest entreaty that this measure is adopted. You will probably agree with me in thinking it a hazardous one.

Mr. Grenville's prediction was abundantly verified by the event. The issue of the project is one of the familiar incidents of French history. The Assembly of Notables took place on the 22nd of February, when M. de Calonne had the opportunity he desired of explaining his magnificent plans. On the 5th of April, the Assembly was adjourned to the 12th; and in the interval the Minister was dismissed and exiled. France became involved in inextricable confusion, and the Notables were finally dissolved at the close of the ensuing year.

The affairs of Holland now began to engage the serious attention of the English Government, and Mr. Grenville was sent on a special mission to the Hague, to ascertain

the actual state of things, which, through a series of complicated events, had at last assumed an aspect of hostilities that appeared to threaten extensive consequences to the peace of Europe.

Without entering into the conflict of diplomacies in which Holland was embroiled with Prussia and Austria, the immediate point to which these entangled transactions were narrowed at the moment of Mr. Grenville's mediation, was the attitude taken by the Prince of Orange for the restitution of his office of hereditary Captain-General, which had been vested in him by the unanimous vote of all the members of the State, but which had been recently transferred to the Deputies of Haerlem by a formal resolution of the States of Holland. In consequence of that resolution, the Prince had withdrawn from the Hague; and an application which was made by the King of Prussia (to whose sister he was married) to reinstate him in his rights, and a somewhat similar remonstrance on the part of England, having produced no effect, the Prince, removing his Court to Nimeguen, encamped near Utrecht, apparently with hostile intentions. He had in vain addressed himself to the States, the resistance to his authority increasing with each fresh attempt at negotiation; and at length, desirous, perhaps, of averting extremities as long as he could, he permitted his consort, the Princess, to adopt the singular expedient of proceeding in person to the Hague, where the States-General were assembled. This was in the month of June. It could hardly have been anticipated that the States would consent to receive so unusual an ambassador, or that they would even allow her to

proceed on her journey; and, accordingly, they took measures to arrest her before she reached the Hague, sending her back under escort to Nimeguen. This very decided step simplified the matter at once. There was no longer a pretext for hesitation or compromise; and the King of Prussia, affecting to regard the indignity offered to his sister as a personal insult to himself, immediately set about organizing an army for the purpose of invading Holland. The greatest consternation prevailed throughout the country; and it was at this crisis, while the Prussian force was gathering in the Duchy of Cleves, that Mr. Grenville was sent to the Hague. On the 3rd of August, immediately after his arrival, he writes to his brother:

Nothing new has occurred here. All eyes are turned towards the King of Prussia, whose conduct still appears contradictory. I trust that by to-morrow we shall know something decisive. In the meantime his army is certainly collecting, and the Duke of Brunswick has accepted the command. Yet his other measures indicate much leaning towards France. I am rather in better spirits about my own particular task here, though by no means satisfied with what I have undertaken, and which I now think I must have had the vanity of a French Abbé to expect to perform in four or five days.

A hurried note of the same date, made up just at the departure of the packet, adds that the writer intends to go to Nimeguen, and hopes to be in England at the end of the week. On the 6th, he writes again from the Hague, stating his intention to set out the next morning for Nimeguen, where he should see the Princess,

and expected to find the Prince and the Duke of Brunswick, to whom it was understood the King of Prussia had committed the charge, not only of the military, but also of the political part of the business. A few days afterwards, a note from Whitehall announces his return to England, adding: "There is every reason to believe that we shall disarm without subsequent negotiation, as you must be satisfied at last."

The course of events, however, rendered subsequent negotiations unavoidable. On the 8th of September, Mr. Grenville writes: "Everything is going on much as it was. The Duke of Brunswick's army is collected, and was to act in about a day or two from this date, if satisfaction was not previously given, which seemed not impossible." On the 11th, he says: "If nothing has since occurred to alter the plan—which, however, is by no means improbable—the Prussian troops were to begin their march on this day."

It soon became obvious that the expectations founded on the likelihood of the submission of Holland were not to be realised. In a letter of the 13th, Mr. Grenville states that "the business is drawing fast to its crisis, whatever that may be." The Prussian Ambassador had given in demands requiring satisfaction, including the punishment of the offenders, within four days; in failure of which, the troops were to act. "I doubt," he adds, "whether the State of Holland can give this, even if they were so disposed, which is not clear. In the meantime, not a man has moved in France, and the confusion seems by every account to be increasing."

On the very day on which this letter was written, the Duke of Brunswick, at the head of twenty thousand men, had entered Holland.

How nearly these events had involved Europe in a war, may be gleaned from the next letter, which is marked "private."

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

(Private.) Whitehall, Tuesday, Sept. 18th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

The storm is at last burst upon us. Montmorin has communicated to Eden an application from Holland to the French Court for assistance against the Prussian army, and the determination of France to comply with this request. The answer will be, that we cannot in any case be quiet spectators of the operations of a French force in the Republic, and that we have consequently given orders for arming our fleet. The press warrants will be out on Thursday, and every other step of the same sort is taking with the utmost expedition.

The Prussian army had got to Arnheim on Friday, and I trust will have been able to act with effect before France can give them any interruption. If this should be the case, I think there is still a possibility of settling the business without coming to blows, but the chances are infinitely against it.

The circumstance is certainly an unpleasant one, and the crisis in some respects hazardous; but I trust that we meet it with as much advantage, all things considered, as ever this country had when she embarked in a war. We must therefore go to it with resolution, and I wish I could say with unanimity, for that appears to me to be the one thing most wanted. The absence of so many people from town, makes it impossible as yet to do more than speculate on that subject, which is open to very great difficulties. I need not say that you may rely on

hearing from me upon it as soon as there is anything to say, and above all, that nothing will be wanting on my part to forward your wishes to the utmost, as far as I know and understand them.

Believe me ever most truly and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Mr. Eden was at that time negotiating the matter in Paris; and although the Government may have reposed implicit confidence in his discretion, they appear to have felt that he did not possess a sufficiently accurate knowledge of the complicated questions out of which this difficult position had arisen, to enable him to act with the requisite caution and promptitude. In order, therefore, to assist him through the negotiations, in the hope of bringing about an honourable and satisfactory peace, Mr. Grenville was requested to proceed to Paris.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Sept. 19th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

In Eden's account of the conversation, in which M. de Montmorin notified to him the intention of France to assist their friends against the Duke of Brunswick's army, he mentions that an intimation was made of a strong wish on their part that means might yet be found for an amicable conclusion of the business, and a desire that the negotiation for that purpose might be pursued with more activity than ever.

Although it is very doubtful whether this is anything more than a *persiflage*, yet, as in their present situation their resolution may change every hour, it has been thought, after much consideration, that we ought so far to avail ourselves of it, as to try whether anything can be done in this way, but, at the same

time, by no means to lessen or suspend our preparations. One of the difficulties on this subject was Eden's want of a competent knowledge of the points in dispute, to enable him to discuss them thoroughly, and to bring them to those short and distinct issues to which they must be reduced, if anything is to be done upon them in the very little time that now remains for negotiation. Another, and perhaps not the least of the two, was the strong bent of his mind to admit the assertions of the French Government, however unfounded, and to soften our communications, in order to keep back a rupture, which he has so great a personal interest to prevent, in addition to those motives which we all have in common for wishing the continuance of peace.

With a view to these considerations, I was earnestly requested to proceed to Paris for a fortnight or three weeks, in order to carry on this negotiation jointly with him. I have been very unwilling to accept this commission, because my opinion of the possibility of its success is much less sanguine than that of others. But I am satisfied that it is the duty of Government to leave nothing untried, however hopeless, which can enable us to maintain our ground without having recourse to extremities. And there is certainly, *cæteris paribus*, a better chance of doing this with the assistance of one who is in some degree acquainted with the particulars which are likely to come in question, and who will most undoubtedly state explicitly the real sentiments which are entertained here. For these reasons, I have thought myself not at liberty to refuse, and have given a reluctant consent.

I shall probably set out either to-morrow evening or Friday morning. It seems best for me not to go with any ostensible character, as that would be ridiculous in the case of my coming back *re infectâ* within a few days after my appointment. But in the other much less probable event, it would, I think, be right for me to have powers to sign with Eden.

It is, on the whole, a very hazardous undertaking, and one which, for a variety of reasons, I would gladly have avoided. I think I am sure to carry with me your warmest wishes for my success; and as I know the anxiety which you feel upon it, you may depend on hearing from me as soon as I have anything worth communicating, either good or bad.

In the meantime, believe me, with the truest affection,

My dear brother,

Most sincerely yours,

W. W. Grenville.

P. S. There is no news, either from Harris or Eden, since I wrote.

Two days afterwards, Mr. Grenville, in a few hasty lines, informs his brother that he is that instant setting out for France. "Accounts were at this moment received," he concludes, "that Utrecht and all the towns in North Holland had surrendered to the Prussian troops; and that the Free Corps were all called in to Amsterdam, which they talked of defending."

The surrender of Utrecht, the stronghold of democratic zeal, literally paralyzed the Dutch. Gorcum, Dordt, Schoonhoven, and other towns surrendered immediately afterwards, without striking a blow. The Senate of Amsterdam made a vain show of resistance, by passing a resolution to suspend the office of Stadtholder; but the resolution was waste-paper. Wherever the Prussians appeared, all opposition vanished, and the onward progress of the Duke of Brunswick's army was literally a procession of triumph.

We now follow Mr. Grenville to Paris.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Sève, Sept. 25th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

I arrived at Paris this evening, and immediately set off for this place, where Eden has a house. You will have heard all the good news in Holland. The effect it has produced here seems to be that of frightening these people into withdrawing themselves from the business. If so, my mission will soon be ended, and the general result will be so happy, that I shall have nothing to fear from my particular share in it. I have but just time to scrawl these three lines, as the courier is waiting, and his getting to Calais early is of real importance.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

The "good news" was neither more nor less than the rapid and complete success which attended the arms of Prussia, without striking a blow. While Mr. Grenville was negotiating in Paris, to dissuade the French from interfering, the Prince of Orange was making his public entry into the Hague—an event which, to the astonishment of Europe, after the sturdy independence shown by the States in the first instance, took place within seven days from the date of the invasion.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Sève, Sept. 27th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

I had scarce time to put down three lines to you by the last messenger; but you will have seen from them that our

business here bears a favourable aspect. I have this morning received your letter of the 23rd, and can with truth assure you that I feel in the strongest manner the kindness and affection which give rise to the anxiety you express.

I have not yet seen any of the French Ministers, and am not to do so till to-morrow. But the opportunities which I have of knowing their sentiments, enable me to judge that it is not probable that I shall enter into negotiation with them. Their inclination certainly is very strongly to abandon the business, and to withdraw themselves entirely from it. In this opinion they will of course be desirous of doing this silently; and by a sort of tacit acquiescence, rather than by any agreement or treaty on the subject. The only thing that appears likely to alter this, is the manner in which what has passed in Holland is received in Paris. The indignation on the subject is almost general; and the Ministers are universally condemned as having been cajoled or bullied by us into the loss of their object. The imputation is, in my opinion, very unjust. I do not believe that they have been for a moment deceived as to our intentions, nor have we taken any pains to deceive them. But I think that they weighed the merits of the question itself, and decided upon it like wise men. It is, however, impossible to say, in a country where so much depends on public opinion, what effect may be produced by this sort of clamour; and whether that may not drive them, against their wishes, into measures of violence.

In this case, it is easy to see that they must act with precipitation, and even with the appearance of passion, so that either way, it is probable that I shall be at liberty to return in a week or ten days' time. I shall certainly do it with much pleasure; for though I felt I could not in honour decline the commission, I accepted it, as you know, with little satisfaction.

The Parliament of Paris is returned, having made a most disgraceful compromise, of registering an edict for continuing the two new Vingtièmes, without any exceptions or privileges

of exemption. By this mode, the Court get the money they want, but in a manner more oppressive and ruinous to the country than that of the taxes they had proposed. I suppose the example will, as is generally the case, be followed by the provincial Parliaments.

Adieu, my dear brother.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

The successes of the Prince of Orange had relieved France of a difficulty; for, notwithstanding that she secretly regarded these successes with dissatisfaction, her finances were in such a condition of derangement, that she was glad enough of an excuse for avoiding the expenditure of a war. Nevertheless, up to the 1st of October, Mr. Grenville did not feel quite sure of the issue. "Things," he observes, "remain here still in a very undecided state. They are making vigorous preparations, and holding very high language. At the same time, I still think that they will not be disinclined to listen to proposals for disarming."

Similar preparations were making in England; and in this unsettled and rather menacing condition the negotiation remained, when Mr. Grenville returned to England. In the course of the month, however, the Duke of Dorset, who was the English Ambassador at Paris, brought the question to a conclusion in a formal shape.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Oct. 24th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

Despatches were received yesterday from the Duke of Dorset

and Eden, with a project of a declaration and counter-declaration for disarming, which the French Ministers were ready to sign. These will be returned to them to-day with a few alterations, but of such a nature, that I have myself little doubt of their being agreed to without difficulty, in which case the whole business will be immediately concluded, and in a manner which I think highly satisfactory and honourable to us. You will, however, naturally suppose that we feel a good deal of anxiety till the thing is actually done, as some circumstances may arise every hour to vary it. Although Amsterdam has formally submitted, there is a fund of much ill-humour there; but I do not think that much is to be apprehended from it, especially if proper and vigorous measures are taken for the security and protection of the present Government in Holland.

The alliance with the Republic will be begun upon immediately; but it will not be a triple one, from considerations which have originated not here, but there.

You will see in the papers, that the Bishop of Hereford is dead. I immediately renewed the application to Pitt, on the subject of Marylebone, and wrote to the Chancellor myself to state the warm interest that we both take in Cleaver's advancement. I have this moment received a note from Pitt, informing me that the Chancellor has agreed, and in the handsomest manner. I think it very lucky for Cleaver, that this man died before Lord North. I have written to him to inform him of the Chancellor's promise.

With respect to myself, I think I see ground to say, with certainty, that nothing of the sort will take place before Parliament meets.

Believe me, my dearest brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

On the 27th of October, the Duke of Dorset presented a memorial to the King of France, proposing the discontinuance of warlike preparations at both sides, which was at once agreed to, M. de Montmorin observing that it never had been the intention of His Majesty to interfere by force in the affairs of Holland.

The death of the Duke of Rutland in Ireland, on the 24th of October in this year, once more placed the office of Lord-Lieutenant at the disposal of the Administration. As soon as the intelligence was received in England, communications on the subject were opened with the Marquis of Buckingham, who, having no longer any grounds of hesitation, personal or political, accepted the office, and on the 2nd of November wrote to the Lords Justices to announce his appointment. Public opinion appears at once to have pointed out his Lordship as the fittest person to undertake the government of Ireland; and before anything could be known in that country of the intention of Ministers, Lord Mornington wrote to the Marquis, commending a special case to his consideration, under the impression that he would certainly be selected for the office. A passage in a subsequent letter of Lord Mornington's, dated 4th of November, written upon the occasion of Lord Buckingham's appointment, possesses peculiar interest on account of the illustrious individual to whom it refers. This is, perhaps, the earliest allusion in the correspondence of the period to Arthur Wellesley, whose name now appears for the first time emerging from boyhood into that public life in which he was afterwards destined to act so conspicuous a part. At this time, he was little more than eighteen years of age.

I sincerely wish you the same success in Ireland which attended your last Government; your only difficulty will be to maintain the high character which your Administration bore, in the minds of every description of people. You will certainly be received by the sanguine expectations of the whole country; and from my heart and soul I earnestly hope that you may return home with the same popularity and credit that you carry out. I must be lost to all feeling, if I did not take the warmest interest in the honour and prosperity of your Government, and if I did not acknowledge myself to be bound by the strongest ties of friendship and gratitude to contribute everything within my power to promote its strength, in any way in which you may please to call upon me.

You may well believe with what pleasure I received your appointment of my brother to a place in your family, not only as being a most kind mark of your regard for me, but as the greatest advantage to him. I am persuaded that under your eye he will not be exposed to any of those risks, which in other times have accompanied the situation he will hold. I can assure you sincerely that he has every disposition which can render so young a boy deserving of your notice; and if he does not engage your protection by his conduct, I am much mistaken in his character. My mother expects him every hour in London, and before this time I should hope that he had himself waited on you. Once more, my dear Lord, before I close this part of my letter, let me thank you most warmly for this flattering instance of your friendship. Grenville, I hope, has shown you my letter, in which I declare that I would not have asked you for this favour, knowing your inclination to attend to my requests, and apprehending that you might suffer your regard for me to interfere to the prejudice of your Government; but certainly this object for my brother was very near my heart, and I accept it with a gratitude proportioned to the anxiety with which I desired it, and to the most friendly manner in which it has been given.

The rest of the letter is filled with recommendations of other persons—Hobart, Captain Fortescue, Jephson, who had the care of the stables at the Castle, an office which he had held for twenty years, and of whom Lord Buckingham seems to have received some unfavourable impressions, a Mr. Mockler, for whom Lord Mornington solicited "anything above £70 a year in a *genteel line*" (his own phrase), and others. In another letter, dated 8th of November, Lord Mornington, in a postscript, refers again to the appointment of his brother Arthur.

I am sorry to find by a letter from my mother to-day, that her extreme anxiety to get my brother into your family induced her to make an application to you through W. Grenville on the subject; I have already stated, that I never would have urged this point, though I accept the favour from you with the utmost gratitude. However, the eagerness which has led her to this step, affords a sufficient proof of the satisfaction which she must feel, in the very kind manner in which you had anticipated her wishes.

The answer of Lord Buckingham to the numerous requests of Lord Mornington, evinces the promptitude of his desire to promote the wishes of his correspondent.

I have desired that your brother may buy his men from a Charing Cross crimp, that he may not be spoilt by recruiting, and am happy that I can name him as aide-de-camp. Your Mr. Jephson is a ——, I will not say what, but knowing him to be so, I may possibly keep him. Your Mr. Mockler shall be ensign as soon as I can make him one, or some other *genteel thing*. Your Mr. Elliot may be chaplain, if he likes being at

the tail of my list, with the impossibility of ever getting anything.

And so on through the rest of the catalogue.

The following letters from Mr. Grenville refer to personal matters, and chiefly to the promotion of Dr. Cleaver, which Lord Buckingham was anxious to obtain, and which is promised in a subsequent letter from Mr. Pitt.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 7th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

I have received your letter of yesterday. I do not know what I can say on the subject, more than you will have learnt from Pitt's letter. If you really feel disposed to insist on the engagement, without waiting ten days to hear the difficulties explained to you, or the solution proposed, I have no doubt, from a thorough knowledge of Pitt's honour, that he will most strictly and literally fulfil his promise, whatever the inconvenience may be to himself. I have only to add, in answer to one part of your letter, that you must recollect that Harley's promotion, instead of being a breach of the rule, was in the strictest adherence to it; and that Lord Lonsdale was obliged to make his recommendation to Carlisle conformable to it.

I saw Orde to-day, who, understanding that you do not come up till the 17th, returns to Bath, as he was waiting here only to see you. He pressed so much to know his successor, that I thought there could be no impropriety in telling him in confidence, especially as he will see Fitzherbert at Bath, and may there settle with him the variety of private arrangements which must be adjusted between them.

I enclose a letter from Mornington. I have not seen Captain Fortescue, as I have been out of town till to-day.

I have just seen Sir James Erskine, who is come with a message from St. Leger, to say that he has the disposal of the vacant seat at Doneraile, which he is desirous of offering to you for your secretary. I referred him to you; and when you come to town will tell you more about it.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. Grenville.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 8th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

I can with the greatest sincerity assure you that I am not by any means indifferent to the point in question on Cleaver's account, as far as his situation can be affected by it; but that if I were entirely so, the interest which you take in it would be abundantly sufficient to secure, not only my most active exertions, but also my warmest wishes in support of whatever you may have to desire with respect to it. But you cannot, I am sure, think me unreasonable if I do most seriously and earnestly desire that you will not press me to convey to Pitt sentiments founded on what I conceive to be a total misapprehension of the subject, and relating to a business on which he so naturally expects to converse with you, and which, whatever may be its ultimate arrangement, can neither be forwarded nor delayed for many weeks after your return to town. If, when you come back, you persist in your opinion that it will be proper to decline all conversation on the subject, it is perfectly easy for you to express that opinion; or, if you wished it, I would certainly not decline to convey your sentiments, however I might differ from them. I should undoubtedly think that such a determination was neither handsome towards Pitt, nor at all calculated to promote Cleaver's interest; but it would then rest with you, and no inconvenience will certainly have

arisen from the delay. From my delivering such a message in the present moment, I know nothing that could arise but a total interruption of all confidence where it is most necessary. To my feelings, nothing could justify such a proceeding but a direct breach of engagement; and, in the present instance, you have received a direct assurance of a determination to fulfil the engagement if you think proper to insist upon it.

The other particulars are of much less importance. Pretyman's appointment was never denied to be a breach of the rule. Harley's tended to restore the equality which that had interrupted. Grisdale was an Oxford man; I did not therefore state the refusal of him to have been made on that ground, but I repeat that Lord Lonsdale was expressly told that no recommendation of a Cambridge man would be accepted.

I have nothing to do with Doneraile, except in a promise of conveying to you the proposition on the subject, as it was made to me by Sir James Erskine, who is a friend of St. Leger's. I do not clearly understand from your letter whether you comply with Fortescue's request. If you do, it would be a charity to let him know it, as he is remaining in London. I am much surprised at Mr. Griffith's delay.

There is every appearance that the Dutch negotiation is going on prosperously; so much so, that it is even not impossible that we may have the treaty by the meeting of Parliament, which would unquestionably be very desirable.

Adieu, my dear brother,

Believe me ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 14th, 1787.

My dear Brother,

I enclose you a letter from Sir William Bowyer, who seems

frightened out of all the senses he ever possessed. I take it for granted it is not your intention he should serve, or that there will be no harm in putting him out of his alarm as soon as possible.

I wait only for your return to town to lay before you a list of applications, which would completely fill up your family, and supply any deficiencies in Orde's list. Every man who knows me by sight, who remembers my name at Eton or Oxford, or who voted for me in Bucks, is to be immediately made either a chaplain or an aid-de-camp, or is to have a snug place of £1,000 a-year to begin with, as Sir Francis Wronghead says. As I know you can have no difficulty in complying with all these requests, I do not answer them till I see you, in order that I may then inform them all of your entire acquiescence.

Seriously, I have been pestered with applications beyond all imagination, but have the satisfaction of not having received one about which I have any other desire than that of being able to say that I have mentioned them to you, and have received an answer, informing me of the impossibility of complying with them.

Harris writes word that, with great activity, the Alliance may possibly be concluded before Christmas.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Everything else going on very peaceably, notwithstanding newspapers and stock-jobbers.

Lord Buckingham arrived in Dublin on the 16th of December, and his reception is described as having been highly enthusiastic.

1788.

IRISH CORRESPONDENCE — THE INDIA DECLARATORY BILL — TRIAL OF WARREN HASTINGS — CONTEMPLATED CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION — THE KING'S INTERFERENCE IN MILITARY APPOINTMENTS — THE IRISH CHANCELLORSHIP — THE KING'S ILLNESS — VIEWS OF THE CABINET RESPECTING THE REGENCY.

On the 1st of January, 1788, Lord Buckingham transmitted to the Ministers a copy of the speech he proposed for the opening of the Irish Parliament on the 17th. He threw himself at once into the labours of his Government, which, judging from the multitude of topics that pressed upon his time, and the conscientious consideration he bestowed upon them, were onerous and absorbing. His correspondence of this period is very voluminous, and embraces in detail an infinite variety of subjects. The universal reliance which was placed in his justice and toleration, drew upon him petitions and complaints from all manner of people. Sometimes advice upon the state of the nation was volunteered from an obscure student, who, looking out upon the great world through the "loopholes of retreat," imagined he had discovered a panacea for all public evils; sometimes the claim, real or

imaginary, of individuals upon the patronage of Government were urged with vehemence, or humility, according to the temperament of the claimant, but in most cases, with the sanguine eagerness of the national character; in one instance, a retired Quaker, animated by the best intentions, suggests a project for protecting the mail-coaches against robbers, by sending them to their destination under an escort of dragoons; and in another, a citizen begs the personal interference of the Lord-Lieutenant concerning a cheat which was put upon a poor country-boy, who had been buying some second-hand article at an old furniture shop in Dublin.. To all the applications, of every kind, that were addressed to him, Lord Buckingham paid scrupulous attention, bringing to the discharge of the most trivial duties of his station the same diligence and earnestness he bestowed on the most important.

The majority of the questions relating to Ireland, which are thrown up in the course of his political and public correspondence, possess little attraction at this distance of time, having reference chiefly to fugitive topics, such as the augmentation of the army (a measure which his Lordship held to be of paramount necessity), the reduction of expenditure, and the conflicts of local parties; but, although the immediate importance of these questions has long since passed away, they place in a strong historical light the difficulties the Viceroy had to contend with, in his government of a country rent by intestine factions and overrun by corrupt agencies. In the midst of the feuds and jealousies that plunged both the Parliament and the people into a condition of constant tumult,

there were some gleams of a nobler spirit; and wherever they appeared, whether on the part of the friends or the opponents of the Government, Lord Buckingham was ready to recognise their purifying and regenerating influence. From a mass of letters bearing upon personal matters, and illustrative of the conduct of individuals who occupied conspicuous positions, the following may be selected as deserving special notice, on account of the subsequent celebrity of one of the writers. Mr. Curran sat at this time in the Irish Parliament for a borough of Mr. Longfield's; and when Lord Buckingham assumed the government of Ireland for the second time, Mr. Longfield, being desirous to contribute all the parliamentary strength he could to the service of the Administration, endeavoured to secure the support of Mr. Curran. It was a matter of some delicacy on both sides. The nominee was generally understood to take the colour of his politics from the owner of the borough; and although no explicit compact could have been entered into in such cases, and was distinctly disclaimed in the present case, yet it was usually felt that the relation between the patron and the member implied a general harmony of opinion, which precluded the latter from the assertion of an independent line of policy. Such were the circumstances under which the subjoined correspondence took place. The spirit of independence it displays is equally honourable to all parties. At the date of these letters Lord Buckingham's first session had just commenced; and it is scarcely necessary to add, that Mr. Curran took his seat amongst the opponents of his Lordship's Administration.

MR. LONGFIELD TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Jan. 21st, 1788.

My Lord,

The candour with which I met your Excellency on your arrival in this kingdom, received, I hope, your entire approbation. Under that idea, I hold myself obliged to the continuance of it.

Since my arrival in town, I have not been so happy as to make such an impression on Counsellor Curran as I wished to do, and in justice to your Excellency's Administration, he ought to have received. After many exertions, in order to induce him to act as I intended to do, I received the enclosed letter. For my own satisfaction, and to continue the same candid confidence to your Excellency, I beg leave to submit it to your perusal. My heart claims this trouble from you, as my own justification. My head may err, but not intentionally. In reply, I have rejected the offer of the seat, begged to retain his personal regards, and left him to decide entirely on his political conduct as he should think proper.

As to Mr. Heatly, he is no longer my friend and pensioner: he ranges under Lord Shannon.

All I can now say is, that Major Vewell, Colonel Longfield and myself are ever ready to repose the utmost confidence in your Excellency's Government: we will support your measures with firmness and decision, during your Administration in this kingdom.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect and esteem,

Your Excellency's most devoted and obedient humble servant,

Rd. Longfield.

MR. CURRAN TO MR. LONGFIELD.

Jan. 18th, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

I sit down in compliance with your wish that I might explain my sentiments on the subject of our conversation yesterday, more fully than our situation would then permit.

When you first did me the honour of proposing to return me into Parliament, I thought myself bound to be explicit on the occasion, and I was so. I stated to you that the general acceptance of such an offer, might naturally be considered to imply a condition, on the person accepting it, of conforming in his Parliamentary conduct with yours. I also stated to you at large the reasons why I could not sit in the House of Commons under the slighest implication of any such restraint, and I was happy in finding you concur with me on that point, of which I was perfectly satisfied by the warmth with which you disclaimed any idea of your intending or wishing to restrain my freedom by any condition whatsoever. The motives you were pleased to assign for a conduct so very flattering and honourable to me, were an additional incentive to my wishing rather to decline the intended favour. I thought it beyond my merit, and I urged you to confer it upon some other gentleman. These same sentiments I repeated in many conversations I had with you on the subject; but your friendly partiality persevered and prevailed. I do not dwell on these facts from any supposition that you have forgotten them, which could not be consistent with the very honourable solicitude with which I know you have always borne testimony to them, and to my independence. But I recal them to show you that I also remember them, as forming the principal ground of the obligation to you, which I uniformly felt, and professed.

From that period to the present, we have concurred in sentiments and acted together. I now understand from you

that you have engaged to support the present Administration. From what I have heard of His Excellency, and what I know of you, I cannot doubt that you have acted consistently with the public interest, and your own honour; but being an utter stranger to the principles or the measures which Administration may adopt, I feel that I could not, without hazarding the sacrifice of my principles or my character, follow your example in that point, however I respect it. I see clearly, that while we remain as at present, we shall both of us be exposed to that calumny, which you find has even already been put into motion against us. Were I to go to the House and vote as you may—for on any ordinary occasion I could not forget my regards for you so much as to vote against you—it would be relinquishing that independence which I have always asserted. If I stayed away totally, I should be accused by my enemies, of violating an engagement that never existed, or I should be said by yours to cast upon you, and for such causes as they would not fail to invent, the heaviest of all censures, the tacit condemnation of a friend. And, however anxious each would be to do justice to the other, calumny would drown our voices, or malignity affect not to believe us. Thus circumstanced, I should, were that practicable, request you to reassume that seat, which I could no longer fill with honour to you, or safety to myself. Though this cannot be done directly, yet we may obtain the same end by an expedient tantamount in effect, and which I mentioned to you yesterday, that is by your permitting me to procure a return for a friend of yours for the remainder of this Parliament, or to give him such a sum as may enable him to procure it, when there shall be an opportunity. Let me assure you, I am infinitely obliged by your manner of receiving this proposal, as it shows me that you are too well persuaded of my regard and respect for you to suppose it made with any, the remotest view of putting an end to our intimacy or friendship. On the contrary, I ask it as a favour, from that very friendship, and because I

am anxious to preserve it inviolate. Neither am I afraid of being thought uneasy under a sense of obligation, or desirous of being freed from it by the paltry expedient of a partial compensation. I think you know me too well to suspect me of so sordid an idea, and on your vindication of me as to that, will I cordially rely. I cannot but add that I am happy in making this proposition at a time when the popularity of the Administration you have acceded to, must evince to you and to everybody, that my object is perfectly disinterested. The funds of opposition, if in fact such a thing exists, you will allow are too low at present to have much temptation for a purchaser.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with great truth and regard, your much obliged and affectionate humble servant,

JOHN P. CURRAN.

THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM TO MR. LONGFIELD.

Dublin Castle, Jan. 23rd, 1788.

SIR,

Your letter, enclosing one from Mr. Curran, reached me at a moment when my attention was taken up with other business, else I should have immediately answered it.

I am very sensible of the candour with which you have declared your intentions of supporting me, and of your exertions to induce Counsellor Curran to act with you in that line of conduct. The offer of the seat, on his part, is handsome; as is likewise your refusal of it.

I am much honoured by the confidence which you have shown me on this occasion, and have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient and faithful humble servant,

N. B.

Richard Longfield, Esq.

The arrangement for the establishment of Arthur Wellesley as one of the aide-de-camps to Lord Buckingham, alluded to in a recent letter from Lord Mornington, suffered an interruption on the threshold from a proposal made by Sir George Yonge, then Secretary at War, for reducing the gentlemen holding those appointments to half-pay. Lord Mornington, who was still in England, resented the proposal indignantly, and brought the affair under the notice of the Lord-Lieutenant. He writes on the 8th of January,

Sir George Yonge had retreated into Devonshire before I received your letter; but I have ventured to disturb his retirement by an epistle of four sides of paper, to which I could not yet have received an answer. I cannot conceive what he can mean by this manœuvre, because I cannot see any advantage to him in the reduction of any, or of all your aide-de-camps to half-pay; and I am clearly of opinion, that there is no argument which can be drawn in favour of the reduction of any, which will not equally apply to all. I do not exactly understand, by the papers which I received from you, what was the nature of his proposal with respect to the 9th and 10th companies. I have threatened, that my brother shall join his regiment in India. This business is now very unfortunate to Arthur, as his men are now all raised, and he has concluded an agreement for an exchange, which only waits the mighty fiat of the Secretary at War. I fear he must wait for the decision of that great character; for I think under the present circumstances he cannot safely leave England. However, I hope the Secretary will deign to temper his grandeur with a little common sense in the course of a few days, and then I will consign your aide-de-camp to you by the first mail-coach.

Lord Mornington, however, had no necessity to carry out his threat of sending his brother to India. That service was reserved for a later day. Sir George Yonge's project appears to have been over-ruled, at least so far as Arthur Wellesley was concerned, and the young aide-de-camp was duly forwarded to his post of honour. In the month of April, Lord Mornington writes again to the Viceroy, thanking him for the kindness with which he has treated his *protégé*.

My principal reason for intruding on you now, is to express my warm and hearty thanks for your great kindness to my brother, of which I have not only received the most pleasing accounts from himself, but have heard from various other quarters. You will easily be persuaded, that I must feel your goodness to him as the strongest and most grateful instance of your regard for me. I must also do my brother the justice to assure you that he feels as he ought to do on this subject, and that you have warmly attached him to you. All his letters that I have seen, not only to me, but to many others totally unconnected with you, speak the most sincere language of gratitude and affection for the reception you have given him. He also expresses great obligations to Lady Buckingham, whom I must beg you to thank in my name.

Mr. Grenville's correspondence with his brother was now resumed with the same activity as before, ranging over every question of public moment affecting the foreign and domestic policy of the country. One of the topics which began to occupy a large space in the public mind about the beginning of the year was the contemplated

movement for the abolition of the Slave Trade. The abstract justice of the abolition, and the practical difficulties in the way of effecting it, were equally obvious to Mr. Grenville.

The business of the Slave Trade is referred to the Committee of Trade. It is a very extensive investigation, and by no means a pleasant subject of inquiry at such a board, because I take it the result will clearly be what one knew sufficiently without much inquiry—that on every principle of humanity, justice, or religion, the slave trade is unjustifiable, and that at the same time it is, in a commercial point of view, highly beneficial, though I believe not so much as those who are concerned in it pretend. On this view of the question I have certainly formed my opinion, that the duty of Parliament is that which would be the duty of each individual sitting there, namely, to sacrifice objects of advantage to principles of justice. It is, however, a great question, and of no little embarrassment to Government, who run the risk of offending a numerous and powerful body of men. I am told that there is an idea of calling the county of Bucks together, to petition as other counties have done. This will be very distressing to me, because, although my opinion is formed, it would not be very decent for me to declare it publicly, while an inquiry is pending at the Board of which I am a member.

The subject was new and startling at this time, and Lord Buckingham took alarm at the notion of a sudden and complete measure of abolition. Having communicated his doubts to Mr. Grenville, the reply of the latter expresses a general concurrence in his views.

Our ideas do not seem very different as to the Slave Trade. I

never entertained an idea that we could liberate the slaves actually in the Islands, except by some such gradual measure as you mention. But I am very sanguine in thinking that a law preventing the carrying any more slaves to the Islands in British ships (the only vessels that can legally trade there) may be passed and enforced without considerable difficulty or danger.

Towards the end of January Lord Mornington writes:

We are all very eagerly engaged in considering a plan for the abolition of the Slave Trade, which is to be soon brought forward by Wilberforce. I hear that Burke is to prove slavery to be an excellent thing for negroes, and that there is a great distinction between an Indian Begum and an African Wowski.

That some of the supporters of the Administration did not consider Mr. Wilberforce the fittest person to bring forward the question is frankly avowed in several of these letters. Sir William Young, a constant and lively correspondent, communicates his apprehensions on this point to Lord Buckingham. His letter is dated the 20th of February.

The French have offered our people of Liverpool (hearing that we are on the eve of surrendering our Slave Trade) no less than £5 per ton premium to carry on the trade between Africa and the French islands. When Wilberforce intends to come forward is not settled, nor what his precise motion. I cannot help feeling its absurdity *d'avance*, knowing my friend Wilberforce to be a mere utopian philanthropist on a subject which a little needs the practical politician.

On the 9th of May following, Mr. Pitt, taking the question into his own hands, moved a resolution pledging the House to the consideration of the Slave Trade in the ensuing session. Upon this, Sir William Young remarks:

The Slave Trade, obviously from the debate on Friday last, will be made an election tool to work at the Dissenters with, and gain the hurra' of the lower people. When Pitt shall come forward to unite humanity and justice with policy and the public necessities, and produce early next session some measures of legislation for the colonies, and of regulation in the trade, I foresee the clamour will be "What! regulate rapine and murder! and legislate slavery in the British dominions!" and all of the measure, as to the abolition of the trade which is wisely put by, will be artfully taken up to discredit what is humanely done. And this is the mischief of leaving such business to the good and brilliant, but little-wise or solid Wilberforce, who did not know, that in a business of such extent as to the interests of the public, their feelings should not have been excited to go beyond the mode or degree of practicable remedy to the evil; that to give hopes of something is to render the full accomplishment more grateful; and that to anticipate the most that can be done, is to render the doing less thankless, and as nothing. Adopting the strongest wishes for the full abolition of slavery and the Slave Trade, was it not folly in the extreme to throw out the idea of full abolition previous to investigation of how far it was possible to go, and where a stop of necessity must be made. Wilberforce hath everywhere canvassed addresses for total abolition!

These passages, collected from the Correspondence, possess some historical value from their immediate bearing upon the state and action of opinion, at the time when

this question was originally introduced into Parliament. Wilberforce was confessedly not considered a practical politician, and his support was regarded by Pitt with apprehension. His sincerity was admitted by everybody, but there seems to have been a strange want of confidence in his judgment. By agitating the country for total abolition, before the public had had an opportunity of investigating the bearings of the question, he showed more zeal than discretion, and seriously embarrassed the proceedings of the Minister. Wilberforce had the best intentions in the world, but, like other politicians, sometimes erred in carrying them out.

Not the least charm of these letters is the insight they afford into the characters of the principal persons concerned in them; and the slightest passages that assist us to a nearer view of men who occupied so large a space in their own times, and whose actions enter into the history of the country, have a distinct attraction in this point of view.

Allusion has already been made to the sensitiveness of Lord Buckingham on personal points of form and etiquette, which sometimes disposed him to fancy discourtesy or indifference where none was really contemplated. It can hardly be supposed that this trait could have been generated in the mind of a statesman of such tried ability and acknowledged influence from any distrust in his own powers, or in the high position he held amongst his contemporaries; and it must, therefore, be regarded entirely as a matter of temperament. It was the weakness of a nature capable of the sincerest attachments,

and jealous of every appearance of neglect in those whose regards it cherished. Between his Lordship and Lord Sydney there existed a strict bond of friendship. It had been tested in the struggles of public life, and cemented by many interchanges of confidence in their private relations. Lord Sydney, however, appears upon some occasion to have forgotten, in his official capacity as Secretary of State, the formality with which the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland should have been addressed, and to have lapsed, perhaps unconsciously, into that familiar tone which, no doubt, sat more easily upon him in writing to his friend, Lord Buckingham. The particular subject is of no importance; but, whatever it was, Lord Buckingham was dissatisfied with his correspondent's style, and indicated so much to him. Here is Lord Sydney's answer, marked "private;" admirable as a specimen of excellent feeling and indomitable good-humour.

LORD SYDNEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Grosvenor Square, Feb. 6th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

I heartily congratulate you upon the success of two very important questions, which has been determined so much to the advantage of the public, and to the credit of your Lordship's Administration. I should have been very sorry if the style of any letter of mine should have had the effect of diminishing in the least degree the pleasure which you must have received from the news which had just reached you from the House of Commons. I agree with you that forms must be observed, and surely none more exactly than those which consist in the mutual

respect and civility which ought to appear in the correspondence between two of the principal offices of Government. In a private one between the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Sydney, the latter will always be inclined to be as little punctilious as any man living. But as to that in question, I must say, that I had no reason to suppose that my style could seem objectionable, when I had endeavoured to imitate that of the letter to which mine was an answer. To leave this subject, you may depend upon my being as cautious as possible in future, to avoid any deviation from the usual form; but in the present case, the King's leave of absence being already given, it is not proper that any alteration should be made.

I have seen the Duchess of Rutland to-day for the first time at her Grace's desire. She expressed herself in the strongest terms of gratitude towards your Lordship, for your attention in transmitting to her the extracts from the addresses of both Houses of Parliament, as well as for your letter upon the subject. Her manner and appearance was truly affecting, particularly to one who has had a strong attachment to the Rutland family all his life. She is very much pleased with the marks of respect which have been shown by all ranks of people to the memory of the poor Duke, and said that she must always love Ireland. I never saw more propriety, or a more unaffected general behaviour in my life.

I have finished Mr. Anselm Nugent's business to-day. I do not think that His Majesty quite likes so total a dispensation with an Act of Parliament; but agreed to it with great cheerfulness, and with very gracious expressions of his desire to do what was agreeable to you.

We have nothing new stirring, except the young ladies, two of whom eloped the day before yesterday: Lady Augusta Campbell with a son of Sir John Clavering's, and a daughter of Sir H. Clinton's with a son of Mr. Dawkins's.

You will be glad to be released, and I am called to dinner. Present my best respects to Lady Buckingham and Lord Temple.

Believe me ever to be, with the greatest esteem and regard,

My dear Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant,

SYDNEY.

The India Declaratory Bill, and the trial of Mr. Hastings, were the great subjects which now engrossed the attention of the Government and the country. Mr. Pitt had just introduced the famous Declaratory Act, for the purpose of conferring new and important powers on the Board of Control, and explaining the provisions of his former measure for the regulation of Indian affairs. Against this Bill a most formidable opposition was organized in the House of Commons, threatening, by its numbers no less than by the weight of its objections, to overthrow the Administration. The House was reminded that Mr. Fox's Cabinet had fallen by a similar measure; and it was endeavoured to be shown, not without a considerable appearance of justification, that the most odious features of that measure were revived and exaggerated in the Bill now introduced by Mr. Pitt. It is evident from Mr. Grenville's letter on this subject, that, although Ministers disclaimed the resemblance thus traced between the two plans, they regarded with no inconsiderable apprehension the arguments founded upon it, and the consequences they entailed. Lord Mornington writes more hopefully, but his letter was written before the decision which betrayed the defection of many of the usual supporters of Government.

LORD MORNINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Hertford St., March 4th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

As I know that William Grenville has not been quite well for this day or two, and that he does not mean to write to you by this post, I trouble you with a few lines, in order to give you the earliest account of the business of last night. Erskine and Rous came to the bar in support of the Petition from the Directors against the East India Declaratory Act, and there was a great muster of the forces of Fox, Lord North, Lord Lansdowne, and of the refractory directors, with every appearance that some great exertion was to be made. Erskine made the most absurd speech imaginable: and after having spoke for near three hours, he was taken ill, and obliged to leave the bar. Rous was then heard; and when he had finished, Erskine (who had dined in the coffee-room with the Prince of Wales, and been well primed with *brandy*), returned to the charge, I understand at the express desire of His Royal Highness. Erskine now spoke for near two hours, and delivered the most stupid, gross, and indecent libel against Pitt, that ever was imagined; the abuse was so monstrous, that the House *hissed* him at his conclusion. After this, Rous proposed to produce some letters from the Treasury and the Board of Control, as evidence of the construction of Pitt's East India Bill; on this question we divided—for receiving the evidence, 118; against, 242. The Lansdownes divided against us; Pitt then moved himself for the letters. The Bill was read a second time, and is committed for Wednesday, when another attack will be made.

We reckon this a great triumph. You cannot conceive the clamour that has been attempted to be raised on this occasion; and the question of the new Act is certainly well contrived for the union of the great men whom I have mentioned. It seemed

great mismanagement in the Opposition to divide on the question of evidence, instead of pressing an adjournment, on which they might have made a much better appearance. It is hardly to be expected that we shall be quite as strong on the question of the Bill itself; but you know the effect of a great majority, even in preliminary questions, on the main subject.

Pitt took no sort of notice of Erskine's Billingsgate.

I will write to you after Wednesday, and shall then have some other points to state to you. I am much obliged to you for your kind attention to my Windsor job; but I beg you to consult your own convenience in it, as it is not at all material to me.

Hastings's trial you hear enough of from others. One fact you cannot have heard, as we have but just received the accounts at the Treasury; the expense of the counsel and solicitors attending the management has already amounted to near £5000, the trial having lasted as yet only eleven days. There are five counsel employed at ten guineas a-day, besides consultation fees, and consultations are held every night. The first charge is not yet finished. Make your own calculations of the probable expense of this business, and of the patronage which it has placed in the immaculate hands of the great orators.

Ever yours most affectionately,

MORNINGTON.

I cannot say how I rejoice in your success in Ireland—we hear nothing but good news of you in every way, and even from all quarters.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, March 6th, 1788.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I am very sorry to send you, in return for all your good news, an account from hence of a very different nature. By one of

those strange caprices, to which our friends in the House of Commons are so peculiarly liable, they have taken the alarm about our explanatory East India Bill; and although that Bill does no more than declare that to be the law which not only every man who can think, but every man who can read, must agree with you is already the law on that subject, they have suffered themselves to be persuaded that we are doing neither more nor less than assuming to ourselves all the power of Fox's Bill.

You must often have observed, that of all impressions the most difficult to be removed, are those which have no reason whatever to support them, because against them no reasoning can be applied. Under one of these impressions; the question of the Speaker's leaving the chair came on last night, and after debating till seven this morning, we divided, in a majority of only 57: Ayes, 183; Noes, 125. So many of our friends were against us in this division, and that sort of impression runs so strongly after such a display of weakness, that I have serious apprehensions of our being beat either to-morrow on the report, or Monday on the third reading. I need not tell you, that besides much real inconvenience and embarrassment, with respect to the measure itself, such a defeat would be in the highest degree disreputable to Government, the personal opinions, conduct and character of every leading man in the House of Commons on our side being involved in this discussion. Add to this the impression in the country, where the people will certainly be persuaded that this House of Commons would not have rejected such a Bill, except on just and solid grounds. We must, however, weather it as well as we can, and submit to the consequences of an evil which, I think, you will agree with me it was not easy to foresee. What hurt us, I believe, materially last night was that Pitt, who had reserved himself to answer Fox, was, just at the close of a very able speech of Fox's, taken so ill as not to be able to speak at all, so that the House

went to the division with the whole impression of our adversaries' arguments, in a great degree, unanswered. I had spoken early in the debate, and Dundas just before Fox. I think this is the most unpleasant thing of the sort that has happened to us; but I console myself with recollecting how many similar disasters we have surmounted. I have seen nobody this morning but apprehend that we shall certainly go on with the Bill, as nothing, I think, would be saved by withdrawing it.

Till within this last day or two I have been much out of order, and this, added to the hurry of this business for the last week, has made it impossible for me to get an answer to your queries. I fear it will be impossible for me to do it before Tuesday, but you may depend upon my exerting myself as much as I can.

I do not agree at all with what I understand from Young to be your opinion on the reduction of interest; holding with Smith, that the hire of money, like that of any other commodity, will find its level, and going even beyond him in thinking the grounds on which he states such a measure to be sometimes justifiable, such as will not support him on his own principles. I have also a doubt, but of that you are a much better judge than I can be, whether it is often desirable to hold a neutrality on the part of Government with respect to such questions. That, however, depends on circumstances, and I can easily conceive such as would make that the only line you could prudently adopt.

This has been the most sickly of all seasons with us. Jemmy has been very ill, and is not recovered, though, I trust, entirely out of all danger. Hester has also been seriously ill, but is out again. I agree most entirely with Fitzgibbon, in reprobating that some *lex et consuetudo* Parliament, which is to supersede the good old common law of the land. Fox's whole conduct and language has been singularly indecent.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

It will be seen that Mr. Grenville complains of the failure, on the part of the friends of the Government, in answering the arguments of the Opposition. Amongst those whose talents raised the highest expectations, only to be disappointed in the moment of debate by want of resolution, was Lord Mornington—subsequently distinguished by the brilliancy and solidity of his orations. Mr. Grenville elsewhere alludes to Lord Mornington's intention of speaking from day to day, which he fears he will suffer the session to pass over without carrying into execution, and begs of Lord Buckingham to write to him urgently on the subject. Lord Bulkeley gives a less dignified version of Mr. Pitt's retreat from the discussion on this occasion, and, in his usual rattling way, runs on about the prominent topics of the hour. In this letter some names appear which were afterwards destined for a wide celebrity, more especially those of "a Mr. Tierney" and "young Grey."

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, March 10th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

Our politics have worn the most decided aspect till lately. On last Wednesday, on the bringing in the Declaratory Bill of the powers of the Board of Control, Mr. Pitt experienced a mortification, not only from the abilities of those who oppose him, but from the defection of some of his friends, and the lukewarmness of others, that he has not experienced since he has been a Minister. It was an awkward day for him, and he felt it the more because he himself was low-spirited, and overcome by the heat of the House, in consequence of having got drunk

the night before at your house in Pall Mall, with Mr. Dundas and *the Duchess of Gordon.* They must have had a hard bout of it, for even Dundas, who is well used to the bottle, was affected by it, and spoke remarkably ill, tedious and dull. The Opposition, therefore, made the most of their advantages, and raked Pitt fore and aft in such a manner, as evidently made an impression on him. I heard from our own friends that no Minister ever cut a more pitiful figure.

These triumphs were, however, of short duration to the Opposition, for on Friday Pitt made one of the best and most masterly speeches he ever made, and turned the tables effectually on Opposition, by acquiescing in such shackles as they chose to put on the article of patronage, all which they had pressed from an idea that Pitt on that point would be inflexible. This speech of Pitt's infused spirit into his friends; Dundas spoke very well, and, contrary to expectation, so did Scott and Macdonald. Government kept up their numbers in the division, and Opposition lost ten. I understand from all quarters that last Friday was, considering all circumstances, as good as the Wednesday before was *bad* for Government. Notwithstanding this happy recovery, there is yet a heavy and severe clamour against Dundas, and I shall not be surprised if his unpopularity should very materially injure Pitt's character and Government. It was by his influence that a Mr. Tierney was kept out of the direction, and a Mr. Elphinstone brought in, which last has turned out the most violent opposer and the most formidable Government has had at the India House; and there is great reason to think the other, if he had been supported, would have been a friend, though that does not seem clear. However, those two men have been the most active and useful to the Opposition in all the late contentions in Leadenhall Street, where Mr. Dundas *ought* to have had a majority.

All this business has given Fox advantages, which he has not neglected; and although Mr. Pitt may be secure as to the

continuation of his power, yet the former has and will gain character, as a firm and manly straightforward politician; which the other begins to lose by nearly adopting the principles of a Bill which he had reprobated and condemned. Devaynes tells me that a few dozen of claret, and two or three dinners, would have operated with many in the direction; but Rose and Steele follow Pitt's example in that respect, and vote such company boars not deserving of such notice.

Your brother William suffered a mortification last Wednesday, which, I am told, has vexed him: the moment he got up to speak, the House cleared as it used to do at one time when Burke got up. I hope it proceeded from accident, for if it continues it must hurt him very essentially. The day after he was in uncommon low spirits, and croaked very much. There seems a general complaint of Pitt's young friends, who never get up to speak; and I am not surprised at their timidity, for Fox, Sheridan, Burke, and Barré, are formidable opponents on the ground they now stand upon. Young Grey has not yet spoke on either of these last days, and he is hitherto a superior four-year-old to any of our side. I have kept Sir Hugh Williams and Parry steady to their tackle; the latter, I think, unless a judgeship comes soon, will not live much longer, not being of an age or constitution to live for ever on expectation, however good his may be, for I am assured he is to have the first vacancy. What the event of Hastings's trial will be, I cannot say; the prosecution is carried on with great ability and acrimony, but hitherto the oral evidence has fallen short of the expectations pronounced by the managers.

Fox made a severe attack on the Chancellor and the Court, for which Lord Fortescue was near moving to have the words taken down, and to adjourn to the House of Lords, but letting the proper moment slip, he was advised not to resume it again by the Chancellor and the Duke of Richmond. I think the Chancellor, to a certain degree, provoked Fox's attack by a

speech the day before in the House of Lords, which everybody said had better been left alone.

I dined last Friday with your brother Marquis; in talking of Lord Fortescue, he said he heard he was a sensible man, and asked me whether he stood on his own bottom, or whether he was a follower of the Grenvilles. I felt the aim of his *gracious* speech, and consoled myself with his dinner and the addition of a new stock of mimicry of those I already possess of him. He and all his Synod are violent against the new Declaratory Bill, and are ready for any mischief against the present Government, though they are the last who would benefit by a change. The Prince of Wales takes an active part in opposition, and goes on the same. The Duke of York in politics talks both ways, and, I think, will end in opposition. His conduct is as bad as possible; he plays very deep, and loses, and his company is thought *mauvais ton*.

I am told the King and Queen begin now to feel "how much sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have an ingrate child." When the Duke of York is completely *done up* in the public opinion, I should not be surprised if the Prince of Wales assumes a different style of behaviour; indeed, I am told he already affects to say that his brother's style is too bad.

I am, my dear Lord,

Your affectionate and sincere

B.

The habits of the Prince and his brother were now become matter of notoriety in the political circles, and in the preceding January had attracted the observation of Mr. Grenville, who thus spoke of them in a letter to Lord Buckingham:

The Prince of Wales has taken this year very much to play, and has gone so far as to win or lose £2,000 or £3,000 in a

night. He is now, together with the Duke of York, forming a new club at Weltzies; and this will probably be the scene of some of the highest gaming which has been seen in town. All their young men are to belong to it. Lord T. had even at Oxford shown his turn, having been sent away for being concerned in the Faro then. I leave you to form the conclusion.

Dundas's character, sketched in a sentence, and the hazards of the Government arising from the Declaratory Bill, are the chief points in the next communication from the sprightly Lord Bulkeley.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, March 26th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

On the whole, there is every appearance that the Declaratory Bill has occasioned a temporary division in the Cabinet, and a run against Dundas, and consequently against Pitt, who stands a willing sponsor for his transgressions, and who supports him through thick and thin. Dundas sticks to Pitt as a barnacle to an oyster-shell, so that if he chose it he cannot shake him off, and everybody believes he does not mean it, let what will be the consequence, because he likes him, and really wants him in the House of Commons; besides, there is no man who eats Pitt's toads with such zeal, attention, and appetite, as Dundas, and we all know the effect of those qualities. You, who know the interior of things, must laugh at me for what I tell you, but I only can tell you public appearances and opinions, all which you may know to be perfectly false and untrue.

Many of the Opposition with whom I converse seem to think a change of Government at a great distance, while the King and Pitt are on good terms, and others are woefully disappointed that all this late business has passed off so quietly, without Pitt

being out and Fox in. What the future consequences of the Declaratory Bill may be to Pitt, I cannot pretend to divine; but certainly it has brought him a temporary unpopularity, and has hurt him in the public opinion. I own, for my own part, that I think *Leadenhall Street*, sooner or later, will overthrow him, as it did Fox; but in this opinion, I know I differ with *la parenté*, who all swear to me, even the nervous Jemmy, that Mr. Pitt has gained strength from the measure, both in Parliament and with the public; such, likewise, is the opinion of all Pitt's intimates. I wish I may be wrong, and shall be very happy to be convinced that I am so.

B.

The ill health of Mr. Rigby, who held the appointment of Master of the Rolls in Ireland, rendering it probable that a vacancy would shortly occur in that office, the friends of Mr. Grenville proposed that it should be given to him, and that he should hold it as a sinecure—a mode of reward for public services which was in accordance with the practice of the period. There were some difficulties, however, attending it, which did not escape the penetration of Mr. Grenville. In the first place, it had become a matter of discussion whether the successor of Mr. Rigby should not be required to perform the duties of the office in person, instead of being permitted to discharge them, as heretofore, by deputy; in which event, Mr. Grenville would have declined the situation. The second point upon which he hesitated referred to the permanency of the office. Some doubt arose on the construction of the statutes as to whether a life patent of the office would hold good; and the apprehension that a future Administration might have it in their power to raise the question,

weighed strongly with Mr. Grenville, who discusses the subject minutely in his letters to Lord Buckingham. But there was a third consideration of still greater importance. Several changes were in contemplation in the Ministry. Lord Howe, who was at the head of the Admiralty, had latterly rendered himself extremely unpopular, and signified his intention of resigning, and was only restrained from doing so at once on the representations of Mr. Pitt, who wished to take advantage of the circumstance for the purpose of effecting other alterations in the composition of the Government. Amongst the suggestions arising out of these proposed movements, Lord Buckingham and Mr. Grenville were severally named for the Admiralty; but neither of them were disposed to accept it. Lord Buckingham preferred the position he held in Ireland, and Mr. Grenville held back, having looked for some time to the Seals of the Home Department, for which he had been assiduously qualifying himself, his ambition being constantly urged in that direction by Lord Buckingham. The letter in which he opens all these plans to his brother is affecting in its appeal to those feelings of implicit trust and attachment which existed so warmly between these distinguished men.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, April 1st, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I am extremely obliged for the trouble you have been so good as to take about the mode in which it will be most advisable to frame the grant of Rigby's office, in case of its becoming vacant. I have consulted Pitt upon the subject, and

his opinion entirely agrees with mine, that the present form is much preferable to the other; for this, amongst other reasons, that a grant of a judicial office, to be held during good behaviour, might be vacated on account of non-administration of justice, or even of non-residence in the kingdom. He says that, after what has passed with the King, there can clearly be no difficulty whatever when the case arises; and that it will be better not to open it previously to Lord Sydney, as it might by that means become a subject of conversation previous to its taking place, which it is very desirable to avoid. I imagine, by what I now hear from Bath, that it cannot be very long before the event happens. I shall certainly be on the spot, and will immediately take the necessary steps for having the warrant sent over to you; after which you may expect to see me as soon as possible, unless it should be necessary that the admission should take place in Term time, which I will trouble you to ascertain. It would, I think, be very advantageous to me, in case of future discussions which may arise on this subject, if you could procure from the Chancellor and Lord Earlsfort, and perhaps Carleton (when the event happens), written opinions that the making it an efficient *judicial* office would be attended with no advantage or benefit. It would still remain necessary that some officer should be appointed to have custody and charge of the Rolls; and the only questions then would be, whether such an office was one fit to be made the sort of sinecure which Parliament here have admitted ought to exist as a reward of public service, and whether your humble servant was a fit object for such reward.

The point which I was desirous of mentioning to you in cypher relates to my having been informed by Pitt, a few days before I wrote to you, that Lord Howe has intimated an intention of resigning his office at the close of this session. The particular reason for secrecy is, that it is of the utmost importance that this should not be publicly known till a new arrange-

ment is framed; but especially not till after the motion on the subject of the late promotion is completely disposed of. Notwithstanding this intimation, and the resolution which Lord Howe appears to have taken, Pitt thinks it not impossible that when the time for carrying it into execution draws nearer, he may be induced to remain. Pitt feels it a point of the utmost importance that he should, notwithstanding the sort of objections which exist against him, and of which you are perfectly apprized. But if he retires, there will be the utmost difficulty in finding a proper person to supply his place. I apprehend, that even before your appointment to Ireland you had made up your mind on the subject; but that you would certainly not be inclined to quit your present situation for one in so many respects less agreeable, particularly at this moment. I trust, however, that if you feel the least hesitation, or doubt, in your mind, you will immediately let me know it, in order that I may take the proper steps. If your decision remains the same, I know no person at all fit for the employment that can take it. The most likely person to be fixed upon is, I think, Lord Hood; but there are great objections to him. Whatever he may be in the Navy, which I know not, he is very far from being popular in the House of Commons; and what is worse, he has spoken there, whenever he has opened his lips, with a degree of indiscretion which has been distressing, even in his present situation, but which would be absolutely intolerable if he were to answer for the execution of so responsible an office, made, as it certainly will be, one of the great objects of attack on the part of Opposition. This will make it necessary to send him up to the House of Lords, for which he has neither fortune nor calibre sufficient. It has been a question with Pitt and myself, whether it would be possible for me to accept of it. At one time, he appeared much disposed to this; but I must confess that my mind has never gone to it at all. The situation would unquestionably be highly flattering to me, at my time of life,

and in my rank, &c. The patronage annexed to it is so considerable as to be a real object, in a political point of view, to any person engaged in a public line of life, where the acquisition of friends is always an important point. Add to this, the opportunity of distinguishing oneself in a department entirely separate from all others, and the temptation is certainly very great. But I feel two material, and as they now strike me, insuperable objections. First, I think it is not prudent for a person who has already been put forward beyond what many people think his pretensions entitle him to, and who has still much way to make for himself, to incur the risk of shocking and revolting the feelings of almost every one, but those who are most partial to him, by accepting a situation for which he must be thought so little qualified, and which will be judged so much above his rank, either in point of general situation in the country, or with respect to any official situation in which he has yet been engaged. Besides this, I am unwilling—after having been endeavouring for four or five years to qualify myself, in some degree, for almost any other line of public service—that my first ostensible *début* should be in one where I should have the first A B C to learn.

It is on these grounds that I have discouraged the idea when Pitt threw it out to me, and I think they have had weight with him. I have no doubt, that as far as respects my own interest only, they are well founded; and that it will be infinitely more advantageous to me to go on as I now am, waiting for such events as may happen to open to me other objects, which I could accept with less hazard. The same considerations operate, also, with a view to the general interests of the system of Government in which I am embarked. If I could essentially serve that, even at a greater personal hazard than this, I should certainly feel myself bound to do it. But the very same circumstances which would make my appointment hurtful to my own character in the present moment, would make it preju-

dicial to the general credit of Pitt's Government; and the consequences of any failure would hardly be more injurious to myself, personally, than to the Administration of which I should then form a part. I have had an explanation with Pitt, in the course of these discussions, on the subject of Lord Sydney's office. He told me that he was unwilling to remove him abruptly, without the means of making him, at the same time, some sort of compensation; but that, whenever any such opportunity offered, he should willingly and eagerly embrace it. Lord Hardwicke's life, Barré's, the Duke of Montagu's, Orde's and the Duke of Bolton's, with some others, were mentioned as holding out no unreasonable or distant prospect of such an arrangement. And I can with perfect sincerity say to you—to whom I think aloud—that I am by no means desirous that the interval should be so much shortened, as to make the appointment immediate. I am in the train of making myself fitter for it: in the enjoyment of as much confidence as that office ever could give me, and with the consciousness of being admitted to many opportunities of doing real service to the Government that I act with. My present income is sufficient—such an appointment would not in reality increase it—and your goodness holds out to me a near prospect of that future independence, which was the only thing wanting to make my present situation perfectly happy. You see how little temptation I have to exchange it even for that to which I have hitherto looked; but much more for that which is so unexpectedly put within my reach, but which is attended with so many hazards to myself, and to the general system of Administration.

I much wish to receive your opinion on this whole subject, not only as it is connected with myself, but as to the means of finding any other person to undertake the office supposing me out of the question. It is perfectly understood that the Duke of Grafton would not accept it, which I certainly consider as a

very fortunate circumstance. With respect to yourself, I have written the whole of what is above; and have listened to any conversation on the subject, only in the idea that your opinion will remain the same. I feel too much confidence in your good opinion of me, to think it necessary to take up your time in saying what you must unquestionably feel, that no conception of competition on this point could ever enter into my head; and that, even if I have taught myself to look to other situations to which you have so much better a claim, it has only been in consequence of what you have said to me on that subject, and subject always to any alteration in your feelings with respect to it.

I am prevented from saying more than a few words on the different questions you ask. I mentioned to you, in my other letter, the line which has been taken here with respect to the Russian fleet, and to their application for transports. The same line ought certainly to be followed in Ireland; but I think it would be very important, for your own security, in so delicate a business, that you should, whenever you receive any intimation of anything of the sort being likely to occur in Ireland, immediately state the particular point to Lord Sydney, in order to receive precise orders upon it, for you see the line of distinction which we draw here is a nice one.

Our Dutch alliance has passed the States of Holland, where alone any difficulty was apprehended, and will probably be signed in about a week. It will be immediately followed by a treaty, by which Prussia and we shall bind ourselves to guarantee to each other our engagements with Holland; but this treaty will not extend to any general alliance between this country and Prussia. The reason for this is, the apprehension that such an alliance would rivet the connection between the two Imperial Courts and France. In the meantime, there is an entire and perfect understanding between this Court and that of Berlin. We have no very accurate knowledge of the views of

Spain. She is certainly arming, though to much less extent than is talked of. I imagine that France is trying to persuade her to acquiesce in the Porte's being compelled to submit to the present demands of the two Imperial Courts, which seem confined to Oxacow, Belgrade, and some pecuniary compensation for the expense incurred. But I think the Porte will clearly not submit to this, till she has tried the success of one campaign; and what part Spain may take in this event it is not easy to say.

Our accounts from India, by the 'Ravensworth,' are in general, very good; but we are a little uneasy, on account of Tippoo, who had made peace with the Marattas, and was collecting his forces with a view of attacking the Nizam, or the Raja of Gravancore, whom we must protect, or the Camatre itself. Campbell was preparing for him; and I have little doubt of the event; but the offence and mischief are formidable to us.

I have just received your letter of the 2nd, with the usquebaugh, for which I am much obliged to you. I think there can be no question of the King's acquiescence, and the mentioning it to him now might set him talking. I have been hindered, by a variety of accidents, from sending this letter off before. It has been written at five or six different times.

Adieu, my dear brother,

Believe me ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

We have the same accounts from many different quarters, as that which Miles sends you. The idea is certainly much talked of on the continent; but I have no faith in it. France is, I think, evidently in no better condition for war now than last year. Their annual *compte*, which was promised for January in every year, is not yet out. The report is, that the deficiency

has been found much greater than was ever imagined. Our revenue is most prosperous.

Lord Buckingham appears to have pressed his views respecting the Home Office so earnestly upon Mr. Grenville, that the latter, some months afterwards, grew a little impatient of his zeal. The obstacle was, how to provide for Lord Sydney.

I cannot (says Mr. Grenville, writing in September), even if I wished it, drive Lord Sydney from his situation, without such an opportunity as has not yet presented itself, and may not for a considerable time to come. Even if that were done, I am by no means clear that the difficulty would be removed.

The subject of the Rolls is resumed in subsequent letters.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, April 5th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

Since I have sent off your messenger this morning, I have had some further conversation with Pitt about the Mastership of the Rolls, which is expected to be vacant every hour. A considerable difficulty arises from this circumstance, that Sir Lloyd Kenyon has discovered, since he has held the English office, that the sale of the places, from which a part of his profit arose, is illegal; and he has, in consequence of this, resolved to give the offices away, instead of selling them. The doubt arises under a statute of Richard II.; and after such a man as he has decided it against himself, it would neither be creditable, nor even safe, for me to persevere in the old practice.

This makes me think it considerably better, that you should endeavour to negotiate an exchange for me with some person on your side of the water, who may not be troubled with the same scruples. Pitt is to see Kenyon on Monday; and has promised to inquire more particularly into this point. I shall not deliver your letter to Lord Sydney till I hear again from you upon it. If it was not for the difficulty of two re-elections, I should think the best way would be, that I should take the Rolls immediately, and take my chance with respect to any exchange that I could make afterwards; but that, I fear, cannot now be done.

I will write to you again, when I hear from Pitt what he has learnt from Kenyon.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, April 21st, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have this morning received yours of the 18th enclosing the recommendation during pleasure. I am not a little distressed at this circumstance, as I apprehend, from what you mention about the Chancellor, that your destination of the office will immediately become public. I am unable as yet, under these circumstances, to satisfy my mind as to delivering or keeping back the letter to Lord Sydney; but as I thought it necessary that he should have your private letter, I called upon him with that, and mentioned to him my wish of keeping back the other, at least for the present, in order that I may have time to think it over, and to consult Pitt upon it. But my present disposition is, I think, to withhold it till I can hear again from you, in answer to my letter of Saturday.

My opinion on the subject itself remains entirely the same,

If the grant is made during pleasure what ground can there be for thinking that another Government would not instantly create it; especially after it has become, as it probably must, a ground of some popular clamour, and after that specific office has been in a manner applied for by their friend the Duke of Leinster. Surely, under those circumstances, it can never be worth while, either on your account or even on my own, that I should accept an object which would only give me about £1,000 per annum in the very situation in which I do not want it. The arrangement with Hutchinson, or almost any other, appears to me infinitely preferable. On the whole, however, I leave it for your determination; but I think, unless any fresh inconvenience from the delay, beyond what I now see, occurs to my mind, that I shall postpone taking any step in it till I have your answer to my former letter.

As to the state of things here, I know not well what to write. I have very little expectation of our not being beat whenever the Navy Promotion is again brought in question; and what the consequence of such a defeat is to be, I profess not to be prophet enough to foretel. I do not think that people in general are aware of the extent and importance of the blow; but it will not the less have its full effect when it comes. You will not wonder, therefore, that I look forward with no very pleasing reflections to it, and that even that circumstance should make me particularly anxious that the present opportunity may be the means of securing to me something more permanent than any Government in this country seems likely to be.

Adieu, my dear brother,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

You will have seen Sir G. Howard's speech, and will hear much nonsensical speculation upon it. We have no suspicions of that nature.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, April 29th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have just received your letter of the 25th. You will have observed by my last letter, that I have not delivered the recommendation, but that I called upon Lord Sydney with your private letter, in order to mention the circumstance to him, and to desire him to say nothing of it till he heard again from me. He behaved with great kindness to me, and assured me he would do in this business exactly what I wished. My own ideas at present incline to taking the Rolls for life: if any other solution should offer while you are in Ireland, it will be always equally possible to arrange it; and if not, I think the question of the legality will bear at least a great deal of argument. My own opinion rather is, that I could support such a patent against anybody. But at all events it will be a much more difficult undertaking to remove me, and one less likely to enter into the mind of our adversaries, than if the grant expressly gave the office only during pleasure. I can lose nothing by taking it for life, even if such a grant is bad, because that will at least be equal to a tenure during pleasure; and if it is good, as I think precedents, and even the true construction of the Act will make it, I have attained the object which your friendship is anxious to secure to me. You will observe that the argument of vacating by non-residence does not apply to a grant for life, *with exception of the ministration of justice*; but to a grant, *quamdiu se bene gesserit*, under the statute which enables the King to grant *judicial* offices in that form. The latter would clearly be forfeited by non-residence, and I strongly think that the former is good in law.

I mention this, because you appear to feel considerable difficulties in any exchange, and I am unquestionably very anxious

that an arrangement in which I fear you must, at all events, sacrifice a good deal to my objects, may be attended with as little additional inconvenience to you as possible.

Our friends are sanguine as to the event of Bastard's motion, which is to come on to day. As this opinion is the result of a personal canvass, I hope it is tolerably founded; but I am not enough acquainted with the particulars to give any opinion of my own upon it. Only I think I see amongst our friends a sort of feeling of our situation, and some revival of that zeal which has been so grievously wanted of late. Against this there is to be set a very general impression of the badness of the question, which is certainly in itself not a strong one on our side, and is made less so in appearance by the necessity we are under of declining all personal discussions, in order to adhere to our principle, of the impropriety of such points being debated in Parliament. I am, however, told that there are a few of Fox's party who do not like the question, and will not vote against us. Plumer is mentioned in particular, and there are, I believe, two or three others. It is a dreadful thing for the general strength of Government, to have these sort of doubtful days recurring so often. I am inclined to think that the event will be that Lord H. will now remain longer than he before proposed, in order that he may not appear to be driven out by clamour, &c.

Sir G. Yonge is to have the red riband, which is comical enough. I will take particular care of what you mention about Fitzherbert; was he desirous of the riband? if he was, I should think we might manage it on another opportunity; though, if I was in his situation, I should certainly think myself better without it. Trevor is to have the other, and to go immediately to St. Petersburgh. Lord Harrington was to have gone there, but thought he could not unless with the *rank* of ambassador, which was impossible. Lord

Dalrymple goes to Turin, and Ewart is to be appointed to Berlin. Lord Mansfield has resigned. Kenyon is to take his seat the first day of next Term, but not to be created a peer at present, in order to break the practice, which was beginning to grow into a sort of right. I imagine, however, that the state of the House of Lords will make it necessary to have him there next year. McDonald is to be Attorney-General; Arden, Master of the Rolls; Scott, Solicitor; and Bearcroft, Chief Justice of Chester.

The impeachment is going on so slowly, that I see no prospect even of the accusation being concluded this year. They talk of sitting only to the Birthday; and, indeed, after that they would find it impossible to procure an attendance, either of Lords or Commons. Our business will certainly be over by that time. The Budget comes on next Monday, and will be a glorious one; as not only the current service of the year, but the extra expenses, both of the Prince of Wales and of the armament, will be provided for by the exceeding of revenue.

The 'Rusbridge' has brought an account from Madras as late as the 9th of January. An answer had been received from Tippoo to Sir A. Campbell's letter. It disclaims all idea of hostility; and a friendly correspondence had passed between them since; so that this storm is blown over, at least for the present; and in the meanwhile we are acquiring more strength every day. It is impossible to speak in terms of sufficient admiration of Lord Cornwallis's conduct. I have not yet seen any finance papers from this last ship; but I make no doubt of their turning out well, from the general expressions of prosperity, &c., in his private letters.

I send you over a case given to me by the Duke of Athol, who has particularly desired my attention to the subject. He is to bring it forward this year. Can you tell me where I can find any of my father's papers upon it?

I have got the cypher, which answers perfectly. I keep it, in order to have another made from it. I shall be anxious to hear of your little girl's doing well.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, April 30th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

Bastard's motion came on yesterday, and was lost, on the previous question, by 221 to 169. This division very far exceeded my expectations, and, indeed, I believe those of most people, considering the popular nature of the question, and the many personal considerations which induced people to vote against us on this point, who do so on no other. It has, I imagine, entirely put an end to any further discussion of this subject. It will not diminish your satisfaction on this occasion to hear that the previous question was moved by me, and that I had the good fortune not only to satisfy myself, which I have not done before in the course of this session, but also to satisfy my friends so well, that the question was rested on my speech, no other member of Government saying anything.

This event puts an end to all considerations as to any immediate contingencies to affect our decision of the point which relates to me. It is therefore not necessary to take any immediate steps upon it, till we can find some satisfactory solution. You see that my mind leans at present to taking the Rolls at the diminished value, but *for life;* thinking, as I do, more and more, every day, that such a grant would be perfectly legal and maintainable against all the world, on the ground of precedent, of authority, and on the words of the statute itself.

The idea of Lord Clanbrassil's office had occurred to me. I

have no difficulty in stating to you fairly my feelings upon it, because I know you will enter into them, and judge, after comparing them with the convenience which you would yourself derive from such an arrangement, preferably to any other. Lord Clanbrassil's life I had taken from the Peerage at fifty-nine, but sixty would not materially alter the calculation. Such a life, on common averages, is stated in Price's book as having an expectation of living from fourteen years to a little less than twelve, according to the healthiness of the situation. On pursuing his calculations, I am inclined to believe, that an annuity of £2000 for my life, to commence after Lord C.'s, would not be materially different from an annuity in present for my life of £1000. But these calculations depend on so many nice circumstances, that, without being more used to them, and acquainted with the principles they proceed upon, it is not easy to be accurate in them. Whatever is the result of such a calculation, you cannot, I am sure, but feel that, at the present period of my life, and in my circumstances, a certainty of £1000 would be worth much more to me, in point of happiness, than an expectation of twice that value at an uncertain period, which though, on general averages, it might be expected in about thirteen years, might not fall even in twice that time.

I state this to you, that you may know exactly what I feel upon the subject; but, at the same time, I know too much what I owe to you on this, as on every other occasion, not to be desirous of accommodating my objects to your convenience. On that ground, therefore, I leave it entirely to you.

I wish you would send me some answer about Sir H. Hoghton, which I could show him as a point of civility to a man to whom civility is due from me. I have not done anything about Sneyd, because, to say the truth, this other business put it out of my head. I am now unwilling to communicate your acquiescence to Bagot till I have mentioned it to

you once more. You know the object which I have in it, and can best judge how far the inconvenience to you is more than worth while.

I have had Miles with me this morning, to mention that he had written to you on the subject of a publication respecting Lord Gormanston's business, but had not received any answer from you. I told him that I would mention to you what he had said to me upon it, but that I could not undertake to give him any answer, as he must receive that from you alone. He desired me to say that he made the communication as a mark of respect and attachment. I confess I look upon him as one of those men with whom connexion or communication, beyond what may be absolutely necessary, is not desirable; but I may be mistaken in this; and perhaps that which has already passed may make it better that you should preserve terms of civility towards him.

The Duke of Athol's statement of his own case has made much impression on me: pray tell me what you think of it. He says he can prove that, although my father passed the Bill of 1765, from the necessity of applying an immediate remedy to the mischief of smuggling, yet that it was his intention to have entered into a fuller investigation of the subject the following year. He presses me to be one of the Commissioners; but this I shall probably decline, on the real ground of other business.

Alexander Hood is to have the red riband, and not Trevor. He made a very good speech for it last night. There is not the smallest ground for believing that Sir G. Howard was actuated by anything else than a sense of the *great military character* which he sustains, and perhaps some ground of pique at the King's having refused to interfere with Mulgrave and myself to give the Chaplainship of Chelsea to a friend of his. He asked an audience of the King for the purpose of making this

request, and sent an account of it in a paragraph to the newspapers.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

You may, perhaps, have seen in "The World," a most scandalous misrepresentation of Mornington's conduct the other evening in the House of Commons. It will, I am sure, give you pleasure to be assured, that there is not the smallest ground for so infamous an imputation; and that his conduct on that occasion is universally felt, and allowed even by those who are least favourably disposed to him, to have been perfectly correct and proper. He spoke remarkably well, and said exactly what his friends could have wished him to say.

Mr. Grenville had now made up his mind to take the reversion of Lord Clanbrassil's office (the Chief Remembrancership), in preference to the Rolls; for which the Duke of Leinster, who had given considerable trouble to the Government in Ireland, was rather a clamorous candidate.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, May 12th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have just seen Fitzherbert, and have had some conversation with him about the Mastership of the Rolls. We were interrupted; but he said enough to convince me, that it is clearly better that I should take the reversion of Lord Clanbrassil's office, leaving the Rolls for such present arrangement as you can make of it. Besides what he mentioned, I have an additional reason, which I did not state to him; but which had nearly decided me before I saw him. It is, that I believe the arrangement which I mentioned to you at Stowe, and which

you so clearly thought the most desirable that could occur for me, is now so nearly settled, that it is very unlikely that anything should prevent its taking place before the prorogation of Parliament, which must be in about three weeks, or a month, at furthest. I think you will clearly understand what I mean, when I refer to our conversation in the flower-garden at Stowe, and to the particular sense which I have always entertained of your kindness on that occasion. Fitzherbert, however, tells me, that he sends off the messenger on Thursday, when I will write to you more explicitly on this subject, and on the other arrangements connected with it, which, however, are still in great measure undecided; but the thing itself I now consider as almost certain. It would be an unpardonable affectation in me, especially when writing to you, to whom I have been accustomed to think aloud, if I were to attempt to disguise from you, that the prospect is, in the highest degree, pleasing to me, as holding out to me a situation, though far above my pretensions, yet so circumstanced as to give me hopes of filling it without discredit. I know how much you will share my satisfaction, and have, therefore, no difficulty in expressing it to you. It is not a little heightened, by comparing it with what I mentioned to you as having been since proposed to me, and what I was so near being compelled to accept. There is, however, still one contingency, which may prevent this from taking place: I think it not a probable one. I am obliged to write a little in the Sphinx style, but on Thursday I will speak more openly. I could not, however, resist the desire of taking the first moment to tell you, generally, the situation of this business.

We had the account yesterday of the *lit de justice*, which was held at Versailles the day after the King had besieged his Parliament at Paris. He has taken from all the different Parliaments throughout the kingdom the power and function of registering edicts, and has created, or (as the "Arrêt" says)

renewed a *Cour plénière* for that purpose. This *Cour plénière* is to consist of the *grande chambre* of the Parliament of Paris, with the addition of the Princes and Peers, of one member to be named from each of the other Parliaments, and of the person filling great offices (Charges de la Couronne). These will make, in all, about one hundred and eight persons, if the calculation, I saw, is right. They are all to be named by the King; but all to hold their situations for life. All edicts are to be registered by them for the whole kingdom. This expedient may give a present relief; but it seems a most dangerous experiment to concentre so much power of resistance in one body of men appointed for life.

There had been no tumult whatever at Paris on this occasion. Some difficulty was expected in the provinces, particularly at Rouen and Rennes; but nothing was known of what had passed there. I do not recollect that I have any other news for you.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

The next letter touches upon the reversion, and enters into a detail of the contemplated changes in the Administration consequent upon the retirement of Lord Howe.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, May 16th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I mentioned to you in my last letter, that Fitzherbert's conversation had decided me in thinking it better for me to take the reversion of Lord Clanbrassil's office (supposing it clearly grantable in reversion), rather than the Mastership of the Rolls. One reason which weighed with me, was the knowledge of the arrangement which is to take place the first week in June, and which I can now explain to you more particularly. The first

move is that of the Admiralty, from which Lord Howe retires, agreeably to his former intimation. From what I understand from Pitt, I doubt very much whether it would have been possible to have prevailed upon him to alter his resolution; but, on the whole, I think it infinitely better, considering his great unpopularity both in the Navy and in the House of Commons, that he should withdraw himself. The last division, and the question having in consequence of it been entirely dropped, are circumstances which I think are sufficient to show that he has not been driven out; and by his retiring, we shall avoid many other discussions, which would, I am persuaded, have been brought forward. Pitt's intention is to place his brother at the head of that department, giving him Sir Charles Middleton and Hood for assistants; and prevailing with Mulgrave, if possible, to accept the Comptrollership of the Navy. I have no doubt of this arrangement being, in general, very acceptable; the great popularity of Lord Chatham's manners, added to that of his name, and his near connection with Pitt, are, I think, sufficient to remove the impression of any objection in the public opinion, from his being brought forward in the first instance in so responsible a situation. To those who know him, there can be no doubt that his abilities are fully equal to the undertaking, arduous as it is; and to those who do not, Sir Charles Middleton's name and character will hold out a solution. On the whole, I am persuaded that this arrangement will not only be the best that could be made under the present circumstances, but that it will be a source of real and solid strength to Pitt's Government, by bringing Lord Chatham forward, and by connecting the department of the Admiralty with the rest of the Administration, which has never yet been the case under Pitt's Government, even in the smallest degree. The opening which Mulgrave makes, enables Pitt to make Lord Sydney sole Paymaster, and to give me the Seals of the Home

Department. He has shown much anxiety to bring this part of the arrangement to bear; and I sometimes flatter myself, that in this part also of his Government he will be considerably stronger than before.

I have obtained his permission to communicate to you the whole of this plan immediately after its formation. I think its execution probable, though not certain. It has as yet not been communicated even to many of the parties concerned. He is to begin by his brother, whom he sees to-day, in order to obtain his final consent, which, from previous conversations, he has no reason to doubt of. The other persons are to be talked to one by one, and the whole to be done and declared the day before the prorogation, in order that my writ may be moved. He thinks Sir C. M.'s consent quite certain, and Mulgrave's highly probable; but that part in which I am concerned does not depend on that, as, even if Mulgrave refuses the Comptrollership, there is another arrangement, though not one equally desirable, by which he will vacate the Pay-Office. The only impediment that can be thrown in my way is from the Duke of Richmond, who has, certainly, if he is disposed to push it, a prior claim to Lord Sydney's office; but there is the greatest reason to believe, that he will prefer to remain where he now is. This will, however, be ascertained in a few days, when I write to you again. I think, if all this takes place, it will be a pretty decisive answer to all the ideas that have been thrown out of the King's wavering; and in that point of view, independent of all others, it is extremely desirable. Under these circumstances, I have no doubt that you will think that I have done right in eagerly embracing the offer which has been made me; and, also, that you will be of opinion that the reversion is much preferable to the office in Ireland, which would, just at this moment, expose me to much unnecessary odium, besides the great inconvenience of a journey to

Ireland, in a situation which requires constant residence and attendance.

Ever most affectionately yours,
W. W. G.

A letter from Sir William Young, of the same date, elucidates the imbroglio still farther, and is especially interesting as an illustration of that peculiar trait in His Majesty's character—his intimate knowledge and curiosity about persons—to which attention has already been drawn. The whole description of the interview with the King is a good specimen of familiar historical painting.

SIR WILLIAM YOUNG TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Old Bond Street, May 16th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

His Majesty honoured me, on Wednesday, with a pretty long conference in the closet; during which we travelled over the whole *carte du pays Hibernois*. He was, as usual, much more particular in his inquiries about *persons* than about *business;* and he seemed to be, above all, very anxious to learn how we stood with Lord Shannon, having learnt from Mr. O. that his Lordship was to be at dagger-drawing with us, on account of his supposed resentment for your Lordship's supposed ill-treatment of Mr. Adderley. I acquainted His Majesty with the true state of that matter, with Lord Shannon's very handsome language respecting it, and his friendly and becoming conduct ever since; with which information the King appeared to be highly pleased, and he was even proceeding to animadvert pretty severely upon Mr. O. for having, as he thought, attempted, though ineffectually, to convert this trans-

action into a source of mutual coldness and mistrust between your Lordship and Lord Shannon; but I thought it right to disculpate my predecessor from this charge, of which I really believe him to be innocent.

The Duke of Leinster's name too was more than once upon the *tapis*, and I detailed to His Majesty the whole history of his Grace's political conduct and professions, from his first interview with your Lordship down to the letter he received from you, in answer to his application for the Mastership of the Rolls; but I said nothing of your future views with regard to that office, neither did His Majesty manifest any desire to be informed of them. In general, he seemed to me to be perfectly *au fait* of the Duke's real character, as well as of the character of all the other leading people in Ireland, whom we talked over, each in his turn, not forgetting our friend, the Archbishop of Cashel.

On points of business, as I have said, His Majesty was much more concise, and I do not recollect anything material or interesting that fell from him, unless it be that he expressed the most entire satisfaction in the planning and in the execution of our new military arrangement. I, of course, did not omit to take this opportunity of offering your Lordship's humble duty to him, together with every suitable assurance of your zeal, &c., for his service; in answer to which he said many very gracious things, and proceeded to question me very closely and *very minutely* about your and Lady B.'s health, amusements, house, &c.; upon all which points I took care to be very precise and guarded in my answers, having reason to believe that, from the lively interest he takes in your domestic happiness, they will make a deeper impression upon his memory than any other part of our conversation.

Mr. Grenville tells me that he has written to your Lordship to say that he has finally made up his mind to the acceptance of Lord Clanbrassil's *survivance*, in lieu of the Mastership

of the Rolls; so I conclude that you will by this time have begun your negotiation with the Duke of Leinster, the result of which I am impatient to learn.

I have not yet been able to see either Mr. Pitt or Lord Sydney, but I learnt this morning at the latter's office that the King had consented that Major Coote should have the lieutenant-colonelcy of the 70th; and the notification of the appointment will, I believe, be sent to your Lordship by to-morrow's post.

The papers will have informed you, my Lord, of the events of France since my last, and particularly that the Grand Chamber of the Parliament of Paris has refused to become a constituent part of the new Plenary Court; so that some new expedient must in all probability be adopted. The Duke of Dorset writes word that the Parisian public still remain very quiet spectators of these disputes, but it seems that in Brittany they are apprehensive of some very serious troubles, and accordingly a strong reinforcement of troops has been sent to the Commandant of that province, M. de Thiard.

In Holland, the patriotic party, though still sullen and stubborn, seem to have lost all present hope of reinstating themselves in favour; so the Prince of Orange is now King of the Republic, with Sir T. H., Viceroy, over him. The latter will, I believe, be created a Peer in a few days.

The ferment in the city still continues on account of the failure of the cotton-traders, many of whom are, it seems, so deeply involved, that it will be absolutely impossible to devise any artificial mode of bolstering up their credit; and it is to be feared that their failure will occasion very great distress amongst the merchantmen.

I send you, my Lord, two pamphlets upon the subject of this trade, which you will find to contain some very curious and important facts, though perhaps you will not agree with the author in the conclusions he draws from them.

Adieu, my dear Lord. May I entreat you to present my best respects and remembrances to Lady Buckingham. I have seen Lady Carysfort, who is very well, as is also her child, which is the very image in miniature of your Lady Mary.

Another letter of gossip from the same correspondent.

SIR WILLIAM YOUNG TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stratton Street, June 7th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

No intelligence having arrived from St. Vincent's since my last letter, my mind is most restless, and so occupied with the contingencies which another letter may clear up, and decide, either that I am to see my father this summer, or to see him no more, that I am unfit almost for any employment but that of walking to the Royal Exchange and back again, on inquiry after a ship. It it most necessary, however, to the health of mind, to avert it occasionally from such a subject, so doubtful and so covered with gloom; and I cannot better do it than by writing to your Lordship, thus engaging at once my attention under the impulses of sincerest friendship, and grateful sense of duty. Of events in the political circle, to the intelligence of the newspapers of this day, I will add the death of Ashley Cooper, and the succession of Mr. Rose to the office of Clerk of the Parliaments. I understand he will resume, notwithstanding his seat in the Commons, and continue Secretary of the Treasury. It is expected that on Monday will be moved the new writs for Sir L. Kenyon, Chief Justice; Arden, Master of the Rolls; Macdonald and Scott, Attorney and Solicitor-General; and Rose, Clerk of the Parliaments. The marriage of Fox and Miss Pulteney is something more than common talk; at the Duke of York's ball he sat three hours in a corner with her; attends her weekly to Ranelagh, and is a perfect Philander. The Duke

of York lives almost with Lady Tyrconnel, and there has been some *fracas* on Mrs. Fitzherbert declining Lady Tyrconnel's visits, as a lady whose character is contaminate! These, with the suicide of George Hesse, form the leading topics of the *beau monde*. Of our political career, I can only say that I made a good guess when I stated the 20th of June as the close of our sessions; the intermediate time has little business pending that will engage debate, excepting the reform of the Scotch boroughs, on which the alternative for or against is equally a Scotch job. Sheridan takes the lead in it, and comes plumed with his laurels gathered in Westminster Hall. His speech there contained some wonderful stroke in the declamatory style, something fanciful, poetical, and even sublime; sometimes, however, bombast, and the logic not satisfactory, at least to my mind. The performance, however, was a work of great industry, and great genius; and he has had compliments enough on it to turn his head, if to those qualities he does not add great *good sense;* a quality which, the longer I live, the more I am persuaded is the true *rara avis*, and not much oftener met with than a black swan:—the white swan of Pindar cannot vie in rarity at any rate.

By this post I enclose two copies of the enlarged edition of my pamphlet, with the Poor Bill annexed. It will be carried, if I can depend on present assurances of support; not merely assurances of individual members, but on the actual letters of instruction which several have had from the justices of their respective counties. Adverting to justices, it is agreed in Bucks to respite all appeals and other matters, with exception of gaol delivery, to the Michaelmas Sessions, on account of the interference of the circuit. Poor Major Tomkins so informed me yesterday. We walked together the best part of the morning, and he seemed restored to a greater degree of tranquillity of mind than might so early have been expected. He talks of quitting Weston, and living wholly in London; and wishes to

engage his mind by attention to the law professionally. At his time of life, this may answer (if he can now apply) in giving the relief to a mind disquiet in idleness, but hardly can answer in views of business, under technical acceptation of the term. He has, however, such delusion, and it must be an enemy to his repose who undeceives him. My wife desires to be remembered in the best manner to the Marchioness and Mrs. Nugent, with,

My dear Lord,

Your affectionate, faithful, and obliged friend and servant,

W. Young.

Mr. Hastings' trial was at its height at this time; and Mr. Bernard, Lord Buckingham's secretary, gives a brief account of Sheridan's third day. The point, naturally enough, which made the deepest impression on him was the exhibition in evidence of the private letters that passed between Mr. Hastings and his secretary.

MR. BERNARD TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Bolton Street, June 10th, 1788.

My Lord,

I have been this morning at the trial: it was Sheridan's third day. It was near one o'clock before he began. There was nothing very striking or brilliant in his oratory: he continued for about an hour and a quarter, and then retired. Mr. Adam assisted him in the reading parts; and continued reading after he retired. Presently he made a lame apology for him, saying that he had a very trifling—— without specifying what, whether illness, agitation, or want of due preparation. Mr. Fox soon afterwards made a more complete apology for him, and the Court adjourned; but till what time I have not heard.

I was gratified with the sight as an object of curiosity, but not

as affording either pleasure or entertainment. It would seem preposterous to me, if upon any charge against the Government of Ireland, the Lord-Lieutenant's, or his secretary's *private* and *separate* letters were to be subjected in a Court of Justice to all the acrimonious, malevolent and palpably strained comments that forty of the ablest men of an opposite party could put upon them, particularly without having an equal number of persons of a similar description in point of talents and political weight to defend them. And yet this seems to be the case in the instance of the present tribunal; for the letters read and commented upon to-day, were chiefly of the above description: the letters absolutely official were very little dwelt upon.

Your Excellency's most faithful and affectionate servant,

S. Bernard.

Lord Bulkeley, whose talents in the way of pleasant gossip appear to such advantage in this correspondence, regards the trial as a nine hours' wonder. We get the true colour of contemporary opinion out of communications of this intimate and easy class.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, June, 14th, 1788.

My dearest Lord,

We have been exceedingly alarmed here, with a report of Lord Temple's dangerous illness. I called at your brother W. Grenville's to know the particulars, but did not find him. I then learnt from Fitzherbert that the crisis was happily passed, and that you and Lady Buckingham were released from the melancholy alarms which you both had on so dreadful a

visitation of Providence. I hope this letter will find you all as well as you can wish or expect. I do not know how far employment and a great situation compensate to you for other *désagrémens;* but you seem to me to have sacrificed more than most men in devoting yourself to your present office, and in quitting your comforts in this country. There is no accounting for taste, and that being yours, I cannot help remarking, with much concern, how heavily you have been visited in your domestic enjoyments, by the illness of Lady B. and yourself, and your boy, and by the death of the unfortunate T——ns.

One is apt to imagine that the air of Pall Mall, Paddington and Stowe, would have kept away such heavy misfortunes, and that you would have been easier and happier than you are now. I sometimes think, that idle men with good fortunes are happier than busy men; their enjoyments perhaps are not so acute, but their cares are fewer.

Poor Parry is retired *dans ses terres,* with a fret on his mind which will probably soon carry him to the churchyard; this has been much increased by a discovery that the Chancellor objected to his competency, at least Pitt says so, and the other does not deny it: between them all he has certainly been very ill-used, and has been led on to expect what was never meant to be given him.

I shall be much obliged to you for the copy of my letter to Pitt, which I enclosed to you in my last letter, as it is the only one I have. It has never been answered, nor has Pitt ever said a word to me on the subject, which I think unhandsome and unkind. He must be the best judge, whether such personal inattentions can ensure the continuance of zeal and activity in his interests of those who plague themselves with counties and boroughs.

I was told yesterday by Lord Lovaine, that the Duke of Northumberland had refused to bring Rose again into Par-

liament, which shows a coolness between him and Pitt; but I dare say it will not break out into anything like opposition, though a strong report prevails that he has joined Lord Rawdon's armed neutrality.

Sheridan finished his summing-up yesterday on the Begum charge, and has certainly throughout displayed the greatest and most artful abilities. The Opposition are very anxious to work it up into a flame against Government; but I cannot say at present, that I see anything more in the public than a nine hours' wonder, and an anxiety for fashion's sake to get tickets for wives and daughters. What may be the future impression of the public is impossible to say, but it seems to have been an unwise measure originally in Pitt to give such a handle to such able men as those who conduct the prosecution against Hastings; indeed, he seems so sensible of it himself, that he has suffered Sir E. Impey to escape impeachment, and has protected him against it, which I do not know is not a stronger measure than the other would have been.

I shall remain here till the 24th, when I am to receive £2000 from Mr. Campbell; and then, with my debts paid, I shall take Sir George Warren's, in Cheshire, in my way to Wales, whence, if I can get leave of absence, I shall certainly come over to you for a short time; the Viscountess being inexorable on the bare mention of Dublin, and we all know she is a steady one in her resolutions.

The Fortescues are by this time perched at Castlehill, and he has mounted a cockade in his title to it, of which he is very proud and happy. He is so much liked and esteemed, and so deservedly, that no appointment ever gave more universal satisfaction.

The Nevilles are at Stanlake, and we were invited there next Monday; but they have put us off till the end of the week, so we shall put them off till another opportunity, as I must be in town on the 24th.

Sir William and Lady Williams are preparing for a tour to Switzerland, with your brother Tom; but I should not be surprised, if the scheme, from some cause or other, would fall to the ground, and end in Brighthelmstone, or some sea-bathing place.

I saw your brother Marquis the day before yesterday, who told me, that he heard, with the *greatest concern*, that your popularity in Ireland was falling apace, and that the candles were out; and concluded by asking me whether I had heard of it, which I assured him I had not. He followed this up by several eulogies on the comforts of Bowood, and of his domestic life. Hah! hah! hah!

Robert Williams has attended his guard duty very regularly, and General Hyde is very well pleased with him; he goes the 24th, for a month, with a detachment to Hampton Court for a month. Lady B. and he beg their love and respects to Lady Buckingham and yourself.

Pray give me two lines, and believe me ever affectionately your friend and servant,

B.

The first intimation of a break in the King's health appears in June, soon after the birthday. "The King," writes Mr. Grenville, "has been a good deal out of order, but is recovered." The heavy calamity impending over the country, the seeds of which were already sown, was little suspected at that moment.

The meditated arrangements in the Administration came to nothing. Personal obstacles first interrupted, and finally frustrated them altogether. As usual, whenever a difficulty sprang up, Thurlow was found the most impracticable man in the Cabinet.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, June 23rd, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I mentioned to you in my other letter of this date, that it appeared to me most probable that the arrangement by which I was to succeed to Lord Sydney's office will not take place till some new opening is made. The fact is, that the plan, as it was originally formed, depended on Lord Mulgrave's taking Sir Charles Middleton's office, and thereby opening the whole Pay-Office for Lord Sydney. But this has been found impracticable, both from the difficulty of placing Sir C. Middleton at the Admiralty, and from the great improbability that Mulgrave could be induced in his present frame of mind to undertake the Comptrollership. It has, therefore, been determined that Lord Chatham should take the Admiralty for the present, with no other alteration in the Board except substituting Lord Hood instead of Brett. Leveson Gower and Middleton are on such bad terms, that it would have been impossible for them to have acted at the same Board; and considering Gower's conduct, his professional character, and his connections, it seemed equally impossible to drive him from it.

This being the case, there will no longer be any opening by which Lord Sydney could have an adequate provision made for him in case of his retiring. You know that I was never desirous, nor indeed should I choose, to press his being removed to make room for me unless it could be done in a manner perfectly satisfactory to himself, or at least satisfactory to Pitt's mind; and, even as things now stand, it seems impossible but that some such occasion must soon occur. Any vacancy of a sinecure office in England would immediately hold out a retreat for him; any such vacancy in Scotland might be given to Dundas, who

would then vacate the Treasurership of the Navy; and any vacancy of one of the ordinary offices of Government might be given to Mulgrave, which would open the Pay-Office. I know that this arrangement would be considered by Pitt as the first object in the disposal of anything that may fall, and I think, therefore, that I am not very sanguine in believing that it is not postponed to any very distant period. Lord Marchmont, Stuart, McKenzie, and Barré, have all them been thought likely to make openings since this business has been in agitation, and there are a variety of other accidents that would answer the same purpose. The enumerating all these chances bears the appearance of more impatience on my part than I really feel, but I do it to satisfy that which I know you will feel on finding that the object is postponed after we thought it so nearly accomplished. For my own part, I repeat what I told you in a former letter, that the circumstances of my present situation, in almost every point of view, and particularly the confidence with which I am treated, leave me very little to look to, or to hope for, from any change that can arise; and for this reason, as long as I keep my rank and pretensions, and do not see others advanced before me, I am by no means anxious for pressing forward the proposed arrangement.

I have tired you long enough about myself, which I should not have done if I was writing to one less interested in that subject than I know you are. There are a few other things which I am glad to take this opportunity of mentioning to you. I do not know whether you will have heard anything of the strange conduct of the Chancellor. When the Rolls were vacated by Sir Thomas Sewell's death, the office lay between Kenyon and Eyre. The Chancellor felt that he could not avoid offering it to Kenyon, but was at the same time very desirous that he should decline it, in order that Eyre might be appointed. Pitt was, on the other hand, eager that he should take it, in order that Arden might have the Chief-Justiceship of Chester, and he succeeded

in persuading Kenyon to accept. From that time, the Chancellor conceived a pique against Arden; and although there is no competition against him, either from Eyre, who is in a better situation, or from any other person that the Chancellor cares for, yet Thurlow has thrown every difficulty in the way of his appointment. Within this last ten days he has refused to take the necessary steps for giving it effect, and has held language which amounted almost to an intention of resigning rather than putting the Seal to Arden's patent. This conduct was the more intolerable, because some months ago, when Lord Mansfield's resignation was in question, he had expressly told Pitt that he felt that Arden must have the Rolls, and that though he disliked the appointment, he would not throw any obstacles in its way. I much doubt whether it has originated in any settled disgust, or desire of picking a quarrel, but rather attribute it to the strange temper of his mind, soured at this particular time by the plague of the trial, and by actual illness. It has, however, made it necessary for Pitt to come to an explanation with him, which, though not fully satisfactory to my feelings, has, however, removed any further obstacles to the particlar point in question; which had indeed gone so far as to make it utterly impossible for Pitt to recede, whatever had been the consequences. I have given you this story at full length, because I thought you would certainly hear something of it from report, and that you would be desirous of knowing the real particulars of it.

Our cousin of Northumberland, has, I think, decidedly joined the independent party under the auspices of Lord Rawdon and Bastard, and in consequence of this has refused to re-elect Rose. You see this is a pretty strong declaration of hostilities, considering all the circumstances of Rose's situation in Government, and of his connection with the Duke himself before he became so great a man. It is peculiarly unhandsome after what has passed about the Riband, which, though it could not be

given to him, was kept vacant till another fell. The immediate loss to us is very small in point of numbers, as the greatest part of his votes are already in opposition; and considering his character, it is perfectly plain that there was little chance of his giving any substantial assistance at a general election. I only lament, therefore, that he has got his Riband; and for the rest, "I trust we have about the Court, a thousand's good as he." And if we had not, we might have them, for offers of negotiation are coming in from all quarters. I believe Lord Beauchamp will be closed with, being only for a Marquisate for Lord Hertford, and the sole question now being the time of doing it. Upon the whole, I am far from thinking that we end the session at all weaker than we began it, notwithstanding some untoward circumstances which occurred. Our foreign politics are going on, in my apprehension, as successfully as possible. The French were beginning to cabal against us at Berlin, but the signature of the Treaty has completely overthrown them there. They were at the same time giving themselves some airs of importance at the Hague. They presented a memorial, complaining in strong terms of the 6th Article of our Treaty, which is unquestionably as offensive to them as it could be. This has not yet been answered, but it will be, and in terms at least as strong as those in which it is couched. Their Ambassador, M. de St. Priest, appears to have had orders to behave in the most offensive manner possible. By great good luck in the first squable that has occurred in consequence of this, between one of his servants and the mob of the Hague, his man has put himself completely in the wrong; so that when he presented a memorial complaining of the insult offered to a person in his service, he received for answer a letter enclosing copies of the examinations taken before the Court of Justice, and trusting that as those papers evidently proved the violation of their territory by a person in his service, he would not fail to support the complaint which the States-General *had*

already directed their Minister at Paris to make on this subject. I mention all this, not so much for the importance of the thing itself, which will end in a paper war, as for the sake of showing you how much the temper of our friends must be altered, from the time when no persuasion of ours could induce them to act with the smallest degree of vigour or firmness.

I have not seen any account from France since I last wrote to you, but there is a report that Calonne has had an account of further violences at Grenoble. There is no further news of the Imperialists. Fitzherbert seems to expect more from the Russians than I see any reason for. He is, however, unquestionably much better informed on that subject than I can pretend to be. I confess I am very curious to see the effect that will be produced by the Prussian alliance on the minds of the other European powers, but particularly of the French. In the present moment there seems great reason to believe that the two Imperial Courts and France, are each of them dissatisfied with the other two. To a certain degree, it will have a tendency to reunite them; but there are so many causes of jealousy, that I think one need not be very sanguine to disbelieve the probability of any permanent good understanding being established between them.

Nothing could be handsomer than the manner in which the King acceded to the proposal which Pitt made him, of bringing Lord Chatham and myself forward in the manner then intended. He has since spoken to me on the subject in the most flattering terms, and has shown an eagerness to facilitate the arrangement by proposing expedients for removing the only difficulty which delays it.

Adieu, my dear brother.

Believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

The King's personal interference in appointments and promotions had produced, on several occasions, remon-

strances and complaints from Lord Buckingham, and the judicious zeal of Mr. Grenville was in constant requisition to prevent an open rupture between the Lord-Lieutenant and the Government. Calm and enduring as he was, Mr. Grenville frankly stated to his brother that, although he could never tire of the employment of serving him, his patience was almost exhausted by finding that one case was no sooner settled or compromised (for it generally ended in that way) than a fresh one came upon the *tapis*. At length, the tenacity of the King on these points wounded Lord Buckingham so keenly, that it very nearly led to the most serious consequences. Lord Buckingham wished to appoint his nephew, Colonel Nugent, to a vacant lieutenant-colonelcy within his own patronage, and through some friendly channel notified or expressed his desire to do so; but the King, without communicating his intentions, or waiting to go through the ordinary official forms, which usually founded such appointments on the recommendation of the Lord-Lieutenant, appointed another person to the vacancy—Colonel Gwynne.

Lord Buckingham felt the slight so acutely, that he threatened to resign; and was probably dissuaded from that step by the counsels of Mr. Grenville, whose wise and temperate letter on the occasion will be read with admiration. Mr. Pitt also interposed, offering to appease Lord Buckingham's feelings by any course of proceeding which, under the circumstances, could be resorted to for the purpose of relieving the transaction of the appearance of a personal or official indignity. The grounds upon which the royal excuse rested were, that Lord Buckingham's

wishes were not known to his Majesty, and that military appointments were not expressly included in the Viceroy's patronage.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, July 1st, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I received yesterday morning your two letters of the 25th and 27th, and was preparing to answer them to-day, when I received a third letter from you with its enclosures. Nothing could exceed my surprise at reading Lord Sydney's letters. The only reason of their having been delayed till the 23rd was, that, at my request, Pitt had desired Lord Sydney not to write to you till he could see him, in order more certainly to secure —what I had understood to have been before settled with him—that the thing should *not* be done in the form in which it has been done. I had never imagined that the thing itself could be pleasing to you, although I certainly entertained no apprehensions of your thinking of quitting your situation, because in a single instance the King's private wishes had interfered with your patronage. I had, on the contrary, supposed that if it was done in such a manner as to mark, unequivocally, that it was a personal interference of the King's in behalf of his own aid-de-camp and equerry, and that it was not a competition for patronage on the part of any other person, you would think it right to do what is done in every other department of Government—to acquiesce in it as a thing out of the ordinary course, and as a gratification of the King's personal wishes. It was under these impressions, that when I was informed of the circumstance by Fitzherbert, on the Saturday morning, I thought it infinitely more desirable for you that I should confine myself to securing that the attention due to you should be preserved in the mode of doing it, and

that it should be stated to you in a private letter, and afterwards be carried into effect upon your recommendation, than that I should endeavour to take any steps for inducing the King to withdraw his interference in favour of a man for whom he felt personally interested, and whom he had acquainted with his intentions in his favour. It was very doubtful whether any endeavours of this sort, from whatever quarter they came, could be successful after he was so far engaged; and he could not fail to consider the attempt in the most ungracious light, both with respect to you and to every other person engaged in it. Add to this, that I did not then know that you had any object in it, beyond the common course of army patronage. With respect to what you mention of the aggravation arising from the preference given in this instance over your own nephew, and of its being publicly known in Dublin that Colonel Nugent's name, and your wishes in his behalf, had been previously stated to the King, I can positively assure you that neither Pitt nor myself, nor even Fitzherbert, as he has expressly told me, had any knowledge of your intention to recommend Colonel Nugent till several days after this transaction passed. Under these circumstances, I cannot still help thinking that I acted right in not taking such steps as must involve you, whether you wished or not, in a personal contest of this nature with the King.

In the point which I did labour, I have failed; but from what reason, or from what fatality, I am utterly at a loss to conceive. It is certainly true that, both in the commission and in the instructions to the Lord-Lieutenant, all military promotions are expressly reserved to the King, and that they do not fall in the line either of those offices which the Lord-Lieutenant himself disposes of, or of those on which the King declares his intention of waiting for the Lord-Lieutenant's recommendation. But the practice and the understanding certainly is, and it is so recognised in Lord Sydney's

letter, that the Lord-Lieutenant should recommend to all commissions below the rank of Colonel. It is on this ground that I thought, and continue to think, that the King's *wishes* only ought to have been intimated to you, and that your recommendation ought to have preceded the appointment. I understood Fitzherbert, at the time, that he had been assured by Lord Sydney that the thing should be done in this mode. To make this more secure Pitt, undertook, as I have before mentioned, to see him before he wrote to you, and as that was impossible before the Monday, he begged him to delay his letter till then. We none of us conceived that the delay of these two days would have afforded you any additional uneasiness, as the whole circumstance would, in the interim, have been stated to you, and explained by Fitzherbert and myself. When I saw Pitt afterwards, he assured me that the thing would be done as I wished it. How it has happened, after this, that you have received the notification exactly in that form which both Pitt and myself laboured so much to prevent, is to me utterly inexplicable. I know that what I am going to say will seem to you extraordinary, and yet I must say it, because it is the real truth: I am still in the entire, firm, and thorough persuasion that there is not in Lord Sydney the remotest wish (as there cannot be the shadow of an interest) to do anything that can be personally offensive, or even disagreeable to you. Pitt, on whose sincerity I have ever found reason to rely, has assured me that he is in the same belief, and Fitzherbert entirely agrees with me. I am to see Pitt again in the course of to-day; but I am not sure whether it will be time enough for this letter. He will have endeavoured to inform himself upon the subject, and to see whether any and what solution can be found for the difficulties which you feel with respect to it. You will, I am sure, feel—and, indeed, your last letter seems to express it—that after what has passed it is impossible to induce the King to withdraw Colonel

Gwynne, as that would be a disgrace to which nothing could make him submit, short of a necessity more absolute than he could see in this case. Whatever else can be done you will, I am sure, find Pitt ready and desirous to do. I showed him your letter, which I received to-day; but I had not communicated to him your two former letters, because he is spoken of there in terms very different from what his conduct in this business has merited. Your letter to him was written in a strain of more justice; but it is surely early in this business for you to complain of having been abandoned.

I shall write to you again to-morrow, and it is not impossible that you may receive that letter even before this, as I think I shall avail myself of Bernard's offer to be the carrier of it. I have written this in the same free and unreserved manner in which I am happy to think our correspondence has ever been carried on; I am not, however, without uneasiness as to the impression which it may make on your mind. I feel the peculiarity of my situation, and the possibility of your thinking that I am biassed by my own personal objects, to lay less stress upon points affecting your honour than I should otherwise do. I have, however, relied on your entertaining a more favourable opinion of me. If I do not grossly flatter myself, I am capable of forming an opinion unbiassed by the considerations to which I allude; especially on points where my own honour, or that which I value as dearly as my own, is concerned. I have examined my own heart, and can say, with confidence, that it is not from personal motives that I speak, when I say that you lay upon these points a degree of weight far beyond what they deserve. If you were in a situation of inferiority or dependance, a watchful attention to everything of this sort would be necessary, and therefore commendable; because, without that, you could not preserve the degree of respect and consideration which is essential to carrying on the duties of your office. In your actual situation, it is surely not doing justice to yourself to talk

of being disgraced by such circumstances as these, or to imagine that your consequence can be lessened or impaired by them. With respect to the thing itself, I believe that it never happened to the most absolute Minister that ever governed this country to feel it in his power to exclude all personal interference from the Crown in the nomination to offices. I am sure it is not a matter of policy to any Minister to wish it; and a very little reflection will convince you that such at least is not the system of the present Government, or of the present times. How, then, are you disgraced, because a single instance of this nature occurs within what are understood to be the limits of your patronage? But you will say this may be repeated, and I shall lose the means of carrying on the Government. My answer is, that you will act in Ireland as you would act here in any of the situations of this Government; that the line is perfectly easy to be defined to every man's understanding, though not reduced to a written rule, and the limits easily seen, where the King's recommendations cease to be the casual exertions of private favour, and begin to be systematic interferences with the power entrusted to his servants. Ask yourself which is the case in this instance.

I could say much more upon this subject—particularly to state the effect which a resignation on these grounds would have—but I am satisfied, from the tenour of your last letter, that this is a step you will not adopt, except on more pressing grounds.

I have not time to add anything more to this letter—not even those assurances (which are, however, I trust, unnecessary) of my constant, sincere, and zealous affection and interest in whatever concerns you. You shall hear again from me at latest by to-morrow's post.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. PITT TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, July 3rd, 1788.

My dear Lord,

Nothing could happen to give me more pain than I have felt from the contents of your letter of the 27th, and from the circumstance which gave occasion to it. I trust, however, that on full consideration you will see that there was, in some respects, less ground than you imagined for the feelings under which you wrote, and that what I have to mention to you will do away every idea of your going to the extremity you mention; which you must forgive my saying that the occasion can never justify, either towards the public or yourself. It is most certainly true that the general practice has been, and ought to be, to wait for the Lord-Lieutenant's recommendation to vacant commissions, and I undoubtedly understood that the King's wishes respecting Colonel Gwynne were to be privately intimated to you, so as to give you the opportunity of officially recommending them.

I cannot, however, find that the general rule is founded in anything but practice, or that there is any such promise as you suppose in the instructions—that the King will wait for the Lord-Lieutenant's recommendation to military commissions. There is a clause containing a promise of this nature, but it refers only to *ecclesiastical* and *civil* offices; and from the manner in which commissions are mentioned in the preceding article, as well as from the words of the Lord-Lieutenant's commission, it appears by no means to apply to them. There seems to me, therefore, to be, strictly speaking, nothing *irregular* in the King's directing the appointment in the first instance; though I most sincerely wish such a step had not been taken, and am persuaded there is no danger of a repetition of it. I mention this only to show that there is, at least, no such ground for objecting in point of form to this proceeding,

as to compel you to take it up in the strong manner you meditated.

But whatever weight you might give to this observation, I trust from what you say in your letter, that you can in no degree feel yourself called upon to carry the business any further, unless on the supposition of receiving from Lord Sydney an official answer, justifying his former letter. He is far from having any intention of sending such an answer, and I am sure, I can prevail upon him either to leave your last letter without reply, or, if it will be more satisfactory to you, to let both that and his letter which gave occasion to it be withdrawn from the office. This is all which appears to me to be now possible. The appointment having actually taken place, and being warranted by the letter both of the instructions and the commission, it is impracticable to propose anything which would amount to disavowing the King's own act, and renouncing a power which, though I hope he will not again be inclined to exercise, he certainly seems to have reserved in his own hands.

I therefore hope that one of the two expedients I have mentioned will appear to you satisfactory, and I shall wait most anxiously to know your wishes on the subject. As to any intention in Lord Sydney or any one else to show any want of attention personally to you, or to the situation you fill, I trust you will feel the impossibility of such an intention existing; because you must know that there can exist no one motive for such an intention, and there exists, in fact, every motive for the contrary.

With regard to the disappointment of your views for Colonel Nugent, I say less on that subject, because, though I most truly regret it, and most anxiously wish to find any means of repairing it, I am persuaded from your letter, and from the nature of the King, that the mere personal disappointment is what you will not allow to influence your determination

on a subject of so much consequence to the public service, and to us all. I am satisfied, however, that you will find no difficulty in obtaining your object for him on some more favourable occasion, which I hope may occur before long; and if I can find any way of making any arrangement on this side of the water, which can make an opening earlier than it would otherwise occur, you may depend upon my doing everything I can for that purpose.

I have not time to add more now, but will write in a few days in answer to your former letter. You will easily imagine how impatiently I shall wait for an answer to this.

Believe me ever, my dear Lord,

Sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. Pitt.

I enclose extracts of those parts of the instructions and commission to which I refer.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, July 14th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I now sit down to answer your three letters of the 5th, the 8th, and the 9th, the last of which I received this morning. I am much concerned that anything which I have said respecting this business should have given you the impression of my having treated it with unfairness towards you. I do most solemnly assure you, that in every reflection that has passed in my mind upon the subject, I have endeavoured to put myself in your place, and to ask what line of conduct would be the most desirable for you to adopt, with a view not only to any present impression, but to your permanent reflections upon it. You must allow me to say, that I persevere in my opinion, that your resigning your office on this ground would neither be justified

in the opinion of the world in general, nor by your own cooler reconsideration of the subject; and I must beg you to observe that this is not my sentiment only, but that of every one of the few other friends with whom you have communicated upon it.

The only reason which you yourself adduce, in support of such a measure, injurious to yourself and to your friends, is the sort of impression which you say this transaction has made in Dublin. To this I reply, in the first place, that I must still think that you, of all men, who ever held that situation are exactly in those circumstances in which you can have nothing to fear from such an expression; and although I cannot refuse, on your evidence, to believe the actual existence of such an impression, yet I am fully satisfied that it can neither be permanent in its duration, nor mischievous in its effects. But it is surely at least sufficient, even in your view of the subject, if such a solution accompanies this difficulty, as can leave no doubt in the mind of any man that you have weight and influence fully sufficient for carrying on the business of your situation.

It is on this ground that you rest it, and I think with great propriety, in your letter to Pitt, and his answer, which you will receive with this, can hardly fail of proving to you that you *was* premature in stating yourself to be abandoned by those on whom you had claims. You cannot wonder that I, who had seen the activity and zeal which he has shown in this business, from his first being acquainted with it, should feel hurt at being obliged to put into his hands a complaint from you so little merited. I felt also that in the generality of that expression I was myself involved, and you must allow me to say that I could not reproach myself with having deserved it.

I trust, however, that there will be no occasion for the exertions which Pitt engages himself to make on this subject, and that your proposal will be acceded to by the King without

reluctance. It seems to me that Fawcitt shows a real disposition to accommodate the wishes of Pitt and yourself, and that the terms which he proposes are by no means unreasonable. I sincerely hope that you will not find any difficulty in making the arrangement for the sort of intermediate compensation, which is effected before a Government fall. It has occurred to me that, *faute de mieux*, Hobart's office might facilitate such a plan. You know, I presume, that he is coming into Parliament here, and, consequently, that he must be desirous of making some arrangement with respect to his office which he cannot well execute by deputy. I have a place to dispose of at Chelsea (the Comptrollership), which might be made worth about £200 or £250 per annum; but it is the sort of office that Hobart himself could certainly not take or execute. I have endeavoured to find some man fit for it, and who could resign to Hobart a place of equal value, but I cannot find such a man. Perhaps, in some way or other, this may be made useful to you; but you must observe that the Comptroller must be a man of steadiness, integrity, and some clearness of head.

I do not know whether Fitzherbert has written to you about Captain Macgrath. The King thinks him entitled to the preference which he claims, but Lord Sydney does not send over the despatch at present, as till this other business is settled it might be unpleasant to you.

I do not very well see how he could avoid sending over Gwynne's commission to you, as you yourself agree that there could be no idea of the King's revoking the appointment which he considered as a thing actually done. You will, I trust, unquestionably think it better to issue this commission without waiting the result of your negotiation with Fawcitt, as a few days can make no difference in point of impression with respect to a thing so publicly known, and the appearance of keeping it back is not, I think, what you yourself wish. I confess, I

think, there is the same sort of ground with respect to sending over a recommendation ante-dated, which was not a part of Lord Sydney's proposal as stated to you by Pitt; that was, that both his letter and yours should be withdrawn. There could then remain nothing but the commission, without any trace how it was granted. Whereas, a recommendation of that sort must be felt by the King as putting him avowedly in the wrong, and to a greater extent than ever your construction of your commission and instructions warrants. I think them more disputable than you do, but they were sent not to prove that the *notification* ought not to have been waited for, but that there was, according to the letter of those papers, no necessity for the *recommendation*. The mere writing to say that Lord C.'s appointment vacates his lieutenant-colonelcy, is surely no object to you; and a recommendation goes beyond the claim you can urge under the instructions. If you are satisfied with the assurances you have received that the substantial cause of complaint, viz., the interference with your patronage, shall not be repeated, it is surely better to let this business rest, than to squabble with the King about the form of what has been done, and which substantially you cannot alter.

We hear this evening that Lord J. Townshend is to oppose Lord Hood.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

Lord Hood's contest for Westminster was now dividing the attention of the Government with graver questions. Mr. Grenville and Sir William Young furnish some details, those of the latter bringing the features of the scene vividly before us.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, July 30th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have not written to you for the last ten or twelve days, on account of my time being wholly taken up with the election. You know me well enough to imagine, that a canvass of this sort for a fortnight together, especially in such a place as Westminster, was no very agreeable undertaking for me. We were, however, in want of nothing but active exertion; and I felt that I owed it to the cause in which we are embarked to set the example. I am persuaded, that if this had been done a little sooner, nothing could have prevented our success; but Lord Hood's security for the first three days, and his total inactivity for three days more, after the opposition had been declared, gave the enemy so much the start of us, that it is wonderful we should have been able to do what we have. As it is, Townshend will certainly be returned. It is impossible, without more minute inquiry, to speak with *real* confidence as to the event of a petition. It is *unquestionable,* that their majority is owing to bad votes, and to bribed votes; but in what proportion, it is not yet possible to say. Before a Committee, it will be easy to detect and strike off the former; but the proof of bribery is often difficult, if not impossible. It must, therefore, depend on a more minute inquiry to decide what probability there is of succeeding in a petition. Even if we fail, this contest has, I am satisfied, laid the foundation of an opposition at the general election, not to Townshend only, but also to Fox. The advantage of this you will easily see, is not the one vote, more or less, in the House of Commons, or any *éclat* from this particular place; but the benefit we shall derive from carrying the war into their head-quarters, and engaging their attention to one point—an object, which was, I am sure, of the utmost use to us last time.

The election is not yet over, nor will Lord Hood decline the poll. It will, therefore, last till Monday next, unless closed before by the consent of both parties.

Lord Howard's peerage, with limitation to Neville, is settled; and will, I believe, take place in a fortnight, at furthest. I have this morning received your letter of Saturday last. You do not mention in it what the sort of expectation is which you wish to be enabled to hold out to Doyle in future. I shall, for that reason, not say anything about it to Lord Sydney at present, as nothing could be done in it till the King comes back from Cheltenham; and by that time I may receive your answer, without which I should be embarrassed what to ask or press for.

I have not yet done anything about the Comptrollership of Chelsea. I need not say, that your wishes (especially in behalf of Tompkins, under all the circumstances which interest you for him), are the most powerful of all considerations with me; but I own that, from my knowledge of him, I cannot help doubting how far he is equal to discharge an office of that sort of detail, without involving himself and me in difficulties, which would in the end be greatly distressing, even to yourself. You, however, know him much better than I do; and I should therefore be obliged to you, if you would consider this doubt, and let me know what you think of it.

Lord Chatham is better, and goes on mending; but he is not yet out. As far as I have an opportunity of judging, his appointment has been well received.

I have been so pestered with that Hoghton, and his eternal Ensign Maudesley, that I shall be obliged to write him word, that if the young man will wait upon you, you will see him, which is the only way that I see of putting an end to a weekly correspondence on the subject.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

You have never sent me any answer about the Bucks Justices, by which means I am offending Powis and the rest of them; nor about the Cranbourne chair proposal, by which means that business is delayed.

SIR WILLIAM YOUNG TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

London, August 10th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

The bustle of the Westminster election had thrown me so far in arrears of private business, which pressed upon me in the various items of correspondence, accounts, and papers, that I have been obliged to delay this letter longer than I intended. My attorney hath now his leave of absence from me, to anew paint the green door, and repolish the brass knocker of his country villa. As soon as Lady Y. is sufficiently strong I propose quitting town, remaining ten days at Delaforde, and then proceeding to swim at Southampton or Lymington, having as just claim to breathe a sweeter air as the said attorney.

On Monday last, I quitted for a few hours the Westminster contest, to dine with the Stoke Club, which was well attended, and your Lordship's venison declared to be in high season. Captain Salter hath suffered some severe loss of fortune from the bankruptcy of the house of Maine, at Lisbon, as I understand; in consequence thereof, he hath let his house at Stoke to Major Masters, and means himself and family to reside at Bath. He hath let his house for £200 per annum, and for a term.

Late in the evening, I hastened back from Slough to protect my house, in case of a riot; but the precaution of the police, in appointing for the occasion some hundreds of extra constables, kept all quiet. The Foxites, aware of the circumstance, sought to arrogate all credit from that tranquillity of the night which

they could not prevent, and advertised "be quiet" accordingly. Unprecedented modesty! I could wish to give some idea of the conduct of the party, but cannot convey a just one. On the hustings a daily farce passed, which even those busy in the general scene, but who attended not that spot, can have no conception of.

At dinner, in Downing Street, I was requested to take "my day or two station" on the hustings; it being necessary to have some gentlemen there who might notice procedure, and prevent the high bailiff yielding in every case to the most abject fears on every threat of Mr. Fox, which he did, insomuch that Lord Apsley and myself were obliged to threaten him with a prosecution. On the hustings were posted a set of young men, neatly dressed in blue and buff for the occasion, blacklegs from all the race-courses, and all the Pharo and E.O. tables in town. Their business was to affront every gentleman who came on the hustings without their livery. "You lie!" "Who are you? damn you!" and a variety of such terms echoed in every quarter; something of the sort soon tingled in my ears.

On observing a dirty-looking man encouraged to swear, and not mind *that fellow*, meaning your humble servant, I could not refrain expressing my disgust, at hearing even invitations to a disregard of perjury; on which, Counsellor Garrow, of Newgate education, addressed me with, "Damn your eyes and limbs! and who are you, who give yourself these airs?" Having made up my mind to put a stop, *in limine*, to such mode of address, I gave him my card, and told him we had better settle the rest of the business elsewhere, "and immediately." He was for the first time in his life abashed, and made excuses, which I gladly enough accepted; observing aloud, that being incapable of using an illiberal term, I should in similar manner *insist* on none being used towards me. I

was afterwards treated civilly for that place. I have mentioned the above anecdote, as characteristic of the deportment of the blue and buff for special purpose of clearing the hustings; and too often they succeeded, occasioning moderate men, who did not choose to commit themselves, to withdraw; and thus getting whole divisions of the hustings to themselves, where they polled every beggar from the streets. The question is not of title to vote in most cases, but of identity; most families being at this season out of town, a rascal was found to personate every absentee. The suborners of perjury not regularly conferring, very many instances occur of an absentee being represented by four or five, *all* admitted to vote on their mere attestation.

The petition, I understand, will be founded on bribery, as well as other allegations of violence, and false votes. Details of bribery advanced are numerous, and well attested; but I doubt if it can be brought home to direct agency. The publicans, who immediately distributed the money, whom we know, and who may turn informers to save themselves, will probably only have to tell us of a false name and a disguised person; however, Lord Hood and his solicitors are more sanguine.

It is generally understood that future elections in Westminster are to be regulated by a new statute, the heads of which are to be: parochial polls, churchwardens and overseers, and inspectors, and parish rate-books conclusive, if against any voter—that is to say, if his name is not there.

Our second dinner of the Constitutional Club, on Wednesday, went off exceedingly well, and may prove a good political net to catch young men just launching into the world from College. Such use hath been made of the Whig Club, and something was wanting to counteract. Other good effects, not merely confined to a Westminster election, may too have place. In short, the late business seems to have awakened

us all to our good cause and just political interests, as well as to have drilled us against the period of our being called out to the general election.

I shall not leave town till the 1st of September, and ere I quit it shall again make my remittance of such news as occurs.

My last boy is a fine fellow, and my wife is as well as possible. She desires in the best manner to be kindly remembered to the Marchioness, with, my dear Lord, your ever affectionately faithful, and obliged friend and servant,

W. Young.

If we did not know that matters of higher import engaged the attention of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, it might almost appear that his chief business consisted in controlling the pretensions of a variety of persons to every office that fell vacant, and of keeping a host of disappointed expectants in check and good-humour, so large a space does this matter of patronage occupy in the semi-official correspondence of the period. Amongst the most urgent of them was the appointment of Fitzgibbon (afterwards Earl of Clare) to the Chancellorship of Ireland, which Lord Lifford was daily expected to resign.

Lord Lifford seems to have been a man of limited capacity and singular simplicity of character, formal and credulous, and tedious in his intercourse with the world. His letters to Lord Buckingham, written in a great clerkly hand, are full of solemn platitudes and ceremonious civilities; and whatever other excellent qualities he possessed, it cannot be inferred that he was a man of much mental reach or vigour. Obsolete in manners and ideas, and living in the modes of a past age, he was respected for the sincerity of his disposition and the rectitude of his

character, rather than for the strength or activity of his intellect. In his seventy-fourth year he came over to London to resign the Seals to His Majesty, laden with the burden of years and hypochondriacal infirmities; yet, up to the last, vacillating in his resolution. Lord Mornington, who met him at dinner at Pitt's during this visit, says: "I met old Lifford at dinner at Pitt's, and never saw him look in better health or spirits; he is, as you may well believe, most generally *quizzed* in London." The letter in which he announces to Lord Buckingham his intention of resigning of the Seals, after many misgivings before he could make up his mind to it, is thoroughly characteristic.

LORD LIFFORD TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Royal Hotel, Pall Mall,
Saturday, August 30th, 1788.

My very good Lord,

My complaints at times to your Excellency, and my apprehensions expressed to you that bodily weakness and the infirmities of old age were coming upon me apace, will prevent your Excellency from being much surprised when I tell you that my journey hither, which at first I thought would have relieved me, hath served only to confirm me in the apprehensions I had conceived that the hour of infirmity, which is an enemy to all exertion, and first weakens and slackens the course of business, and soon afterwards disables, was not far off.

I now grow so clumsy and weak in my limbs, and so soon grow tired and fatigued to a degree painful to me, that although my mind seems as well as ever, yet I am sure that I cannot long do my duty, and there is nothing I dread so

much as sitting upon a great seat of justice as a kind of ruin, and in a state of decay. In my seventy-fourth year, I am not sure that avarice may not lay hold of me, and tempt me to stay where I am, until I feel or am made to feel, by being told that I have stayed too long; and that peevishness too, an attendant upon old age, may not put an end to that command of temper, which I have ever endeavoured to preserve; and that, with such enemies to fair fame, I may soon impair and sully the character and esteem which I may at present have.

Under these impressions, my wishes to retire become divided, which they were not until within these few days past. I should have been happy in first declaring this to you, wishing in everything to do that which but expresses my sincere attachment to and regard for your Excellency. But being going into the royal presence, I resolved to lay myself at His Majesty's feet, and express to him my apprehensions and my wishes to retire, if I could do so in a manner honourable and convenient to myself, when His Majesty's service would admit of it. Accordingly, yesterday, in the closet, I did as I had resolved. His Majesty's kindness and goodness to me was beyond what I can express. Retirement, before decay actually comes on, meets his ideas perfectly; and I have every reason to think that I am lucky in the choice I have made of the present opportunity.

I have also communicated my wishes to Mr. Pitt, who received me with attention and kindness. He said he would confer with His Majesty upon the subject, and forthwith communicate the matter to you, without whose participation and concurrence I cannot be at ease and happy. Upon a measure of such importance as this is to me, I exceedingly wish that you should be possessed of the motives and principles upon which I act; and I will state them to you without reserve. But permit me first to say, that I hope and think that avarice cannot be imputed to me; for, parting with £10,000 per annum, for what must

be greatly below it, excludes the imputation. Ambition must be equally out of the question, for I want no advancement in the Peerage.

Now, as to my motives and principles at this time. I am in my seventy-fourth year, and although my mind, assisted by experience for a number of years, that makes few things new to me, may be as good as ever, yet the weakness of my limbs, my inability to go through any bodily fatigue, and many other monitions that tell me the day of great infirmity is at hand, ought not to be unattended to by any man who hath sound sense or any religion about him.

I stand well, as I flatter myself, with the people of Ireland, to whom I have administered justice for more than twenty years, with both Houses of Parliament, and with the Bar of Ireland; with all of whom I have lived without a quarrel with any man, but I hope without forgetting what belonged to me to be mindful of.

The country of Ireland quiet beyond what I have known it at any time: a circumstance corresponding and consisting with my declarations, at all times, that I would not ever be found to act like a man who leaves the ship in a storm. And to these I hope I may add that I have friends in Administration; that, in particular, I have a friend in your Excellency; and that, although in one of our last conversations you concluded your expressions of great kindness with something that threatened reluctance to my retirement, yet it was done with a countenance and in a manner that flattered me with hopes that there was a friendship under it, that would afford me your assistance whenever the occasion should direct me to look up to and solicit your Excellency for it.

All these circumstances concurring (and so many concurring together I cannot, according to a reasonable calculation of human affairs, much expect), determined me to do as I have done. I have struggled to overcome my passion for my office

in Ireland; but I submit, because I am worn out, or rather am as near being worn out as, I think, a man who wishes to preserve a dignity of character should approach to. I have exceedingly wished to afford your Excellency every assistance in my power during your Administration; and if I retire from the Great Seal, I shall most certainly retain that wish, and display it by such proof as you can desire, and as I can with the warmest attachment afford you. Your Excellency will be a gainer by a change, as you will have the exertions of a younger and more vigorous man, and my best help added to it.

I did not come out of the King's closet until between six and seven yesterday evening, and I was then so fatigued that I could not set pen to paper.

I have not said anything upon this subject to anybody here, save only to the King and Mr. Pitt.

Permit me to beg your Excellency's friendship in this matter, that so much concerns me and my family. Your kindness in it, you may rely upon it, will never be forgotten by me, and I shall transmit the remembrance of it to those who are to come after me. I have now done, and have the honour to be, with the most sincere attachment and respect, my very good Lord, your Excellency's most faithful and most obedient, humble servant,

LIFFORD.

His Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

The only obstruction to the appointment of Fitzgibbon, was the disqualifying circumstance of his birth. It was held to be a dangerous precedent to appoint an Irishman to the office; but it was maintained on the other side, that Fitzgibbon's was an exceptional case, and could not pass into a precedent. Having come to London, to see

Mr. Pitt on the subject, he writes thus to Lord Buckingham:

MR. FITZGIBBON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

No. 5, Arlington Street, Oct. 6th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

Immediately after my arrival in England I saw Mr. Pitt, and mentioned to him that I had your Excellency's authority to say that Lord Lifford had, a very few days before he left Ireland, intimated a wish to resign the Great Seal. Under the impression of the opinion you were so good to give me, I did not go further than to request of Mr. Pitt that he would apprise me of any vacancy which might happen in the first instance, that I might have a fair opportunity of stating my claims, which I considered to be pretty strong, upon the King's Government, not to be passed by in any promotion which might take place in the line of my profession. This he has promised to do; but I have not since heard from him. However, I waited upon the Chancellor a few days since, and he told me that Lord Lifford had, when he was in town, intimated his wishes to Mr. Pitt, as he had done to your Excellency, not to return to Ireland. I am confident, however, that nothing is finally arranged, either with respect to accepting Lord Lifford's resignation, or appointing a successor to him, or I should have heard from Mr. Pitt.

The Chancellor's reception of me was very flattering, as he was pleased unequivocally to declare his good opinion of me as a public and a professional man; and from what fell from him, I have reason to suppose that with your Excellency's support, and Mr. Pitt's approbation, I shall not meet any opposition from him. What Mr. Pitt's sentiments upon the subject may be, I have not a conjecture, as he never in any degree opened

himself to me, further than in general terms of his personal good opinion of me. With him, however, I must conclude that your Excellency's recommendation would be decisive.

Lord Lifford returns to London on the 20th of this month, and I must suppose that very shortly after, something decisive will be done. One thing is extremely clear—that if he should return to Ireland, he cannot very long remain in his present situation. And, circumstanced as I am in that country, your Excellency cannot wonder that I wish fairly to see my way. I shall therefore certainly endeavour, before I leave London, to possess myself of Mr. Pitt's sentiments upon this subject; to which end, it will be very material to me that he should be possessed of your Excellency's. May I therefore request of you, to give me such an answer to this letter as I may show to him. Your Excellency, I am satisfied, most perfectly understands, that I am not by any means anxious to quit my present situation, and that so long as I continue to hold it, I will continue to serve the Crown with zeal and fidelity. My only object at present is, fairly to know the ground upon which I stand on this side of the water. The very open and friendly communications which your Excellency has had the goodness to make to me from your first arrival in Ireland, leave me no room to doubt of my situation there.

* * * * *

I have the honour to be, my Lord, with perfect respect and esteem, your Excellency's obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN FITZGIBBON.

His Excellency the Marquis of Buckingham.

Up to this time, notwithstanding the interview with the King, Lord Lifford had not relinquished the Seals. Lord Buckingham was in favour of Fitzgibbon's claims, but seems to have been a little plagued by the incessant

correspondence in which they involved him, especially as he had strong reasons for desiring to postpone the retirement of the Chancellor. "I again say," he writes to Fitzgibbon in one of the numerous epistles this affair cost him, "that nothing will make me happier than your success; but for very many reasons, which I frankly stated to you, I trust that the opening will not be made immediately, and I as fairly tell you that I will not *facilitate* it. You know what I mean by all this mystery." He did *not* facilitate it; and Fitzgibbon was compelled to wait upon the convenience of Government.

In the meanwhile, some new vexations had arisen between Lord Buckingham and the Ministry; but what they were, does not appear.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Castlehill, Sept. 20th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

Your letter of the 14th reached me here this morning. I say nothing to you of the feelings which have been excited in my mind, by your detail of the particulars of your situation, because I am sure that you do justice to my sentiments on such a subject. Pitt has written to desire me to meet him at Burton on Monday next; and in the present state of this business, I feel peculiarly anxious for an opportunity of conversing with him upon it.

It is unquestionably better in every point of view, that I should have such an opportunity before I go over to you; and I am persuaded you would not wish me to neglect this After I have seen him, as I shall then be within little more than a day's journey from town, I shall wish to return there

for a day or two, even if I should immediately afterwards set out for Ireland. But you may assure yourself, that if I should see any reason to think that my going over there could be of the least service, or advantage to you, I will not let any personal inconvenience stand in the way of it so long as it continues possible.

It gives me an inexpressible satisfaction to find, from your letter, that Pitt's conduct to you in this instance has been such as I expected. If I am not grossly deceived in the opportunities which I have had of observing his character and disposition, you will find his behaviour uniformly the same on every other occasion that may occur. I make you no assurances on this occasion with respect to myself, having a pleasure in thinking them unnecessary.

I confess the motive for this whole transaction, in the quarter where it evidently originates, is to me utterly inexplicable; the whole being so entirely inconsistent with every idea that I can form to myself of *his* situation, his present or future views, his interest, or his personal feelings. I by no means think the circumstance which you mention sufficient to afford a clue for it; and the more I reflect upon it, the more incomprehensible it seems to me.

Adieu, my dear brother; whatever, and wherever you are.

Believe me ever most sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

(Most Secret.) Whitehall, Oct. 22nd, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have just received your letter of the 18th. You will have seen, by my last, the delay which has arisen in examining Lord Nugent's papers, and proving his will, on account of the

absence of Macnamara and the Drummonds. I sent off a messenger to the former immediately after I had written to you; and have received an answer from him, by which I understand he will be in town on Thursday night.

23rd.—I was interrupted yesterday, and could not, by any contrivance, return to finish my letter, though I was anxious that you should hear from me, that there has as yet been no sort of difficulty or interruption; and I conclude, therefore, that there will be none.

* * * * *

I have forwarded your letter to the Chancellor, and added to it one from myself. I mean, *if possible*, to see him, though that, you know, is no easy matter, as I understand the Duke of Grafton is asking it, at Selby's request, for a man who was active against me. I could wish that you would write Wodley a few lines, to explain that you were hampered by former engagements, &c., as I found from a conversation with Camplin, that he had been perfectly satisfied with the explanation you had with him on the subject of Newport, and that he was in expectation of having this. Camplin thinks him of considerable importance.

My impatience, in the letter to which your last was an answer, was owing to my having made no allowance for east winds, which detained the mail near a week, and brought me two of your letters together. You must, therefore, excuse a very unprovoked lecture on punctuality.

I wish I could say to you that anything more is done about your commissions; but this has been, and continues to be, absolutely impossible, for a reason which gives us all no small degree of uneasiness—I mean the King's illness, which begun with a violent spasmodic attack in his stomach; and has continued with more or less violence, and with different symptoms ever since. We put as good a face as we can upon it; and,

indeed, I hope that the danger is now over, but I cannot but own to you that I think there is still ground for a good deal of alarm. He brought on this particular attack by the great imprudence of remaining a whole day in wet stockings; but, on the whole, I am afraid that his health is evidently much worse than it has been, and that there is some lurking disorder in his constitution, which he has not strength to throw out. I have again mentioned to Pitt the subject of the commissions; and he has promised to endeavour to bring it to a conclusion as soon as the King is sufficiently recovered to allow him to see him on that business. But this may yet be some time, as a part of the King's disorder is an agitation and flurry of spirits, which hardly gives him any rest. I need not mention to you, that I should not allow myself to say all this, but in the strictest confidence, and that, independently of the King's great dislike to its being known that he is ill, we have the strongest reasons of policy, both foreign and domestic, in the present moment particularly, to wish that idea not to prevail.

Your conjecture about Denmark and Sweden, and your subsequent reasoning upon it, are both perfectly just. The Cabinet of the former is, in the present moment, entirely subservient to the views of Russia, which are to annihilate Sweden, and thereby to gain the entire dominion of the north. Both Prussia and England have a strong and evident interest to prevent the accomplishment of this plan, but it can be done only by a vigorous exertion. Such an exertion is now making; and I certainly think that if we had any enemies able to stir, it would involve us in a most unwelcome, though necessary war. But I rely with no little confidence upon the weakness of France, whose difficulties, instead of being at all diminished, are hourly increasing; their public credit falling even below what it was at the time of Neckar's appointment, and their discontents again getting to the most serious pitch. Add to this, that we have every reason to believe that we have the concurrence and good

wishes of Spain in the object which we are pursuing, and I think we have, I may say, nothing to apprehend from measures which would, in any other situation of Europe, be most critical indeed. The K. of P. has already *required* Denmark to evacuate Sweden, under the threat of the invasion of Holstein; and we are seconding him with remonstrances very near as strong, though couched in more conciliatory terms. It remains to see what she will do.

I am called away, and have only time to add that the account of the King this morning, from Sir G. Baker, is *much* more favourable; and that if he does well, there is a plan now, I believe settled, by which the arrangement about which you inquire will certainly take place before the meeting of Parliament.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

The lecture on punctuality alluded to, occurs in a previous letter, in which Mr. Grenville said: "I earnestly wish you would answer the questions I put to you about your own business with a little more punctuality. I know your other avocations; but you cannot conceive how distressing your silence often is to me."

In the above letter, which is marked "most secret," we have the first announcement of the King's illness and its origin. The utmost pains were taken to conceal it from the public; and two days afterwards the King went to the levée, to dissipate suspicion. "I find from Pitt," says Mr. Grenville, writing on the 25th, "that the King went to the levée yesterday, in order to show himself, but that he was very weak and unfit for business." The effect of the appearance at the levée is subsequently described.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Oct. 26th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I am very sorry to be obliged to give you a less favourable account of the King's health than that which you received by my last letter. His appearance at the levée on Friday was an effort beyond his strength, but made with a view of putting an end to the stories that were circulated with much industry. He has, however, considerably weakened himself by it, and his physician now declares that rest, and an absolute cessation from all business, are of indispensable necessity to him. I am much mortified at the delay which this occasions in the final conclusion of the business about your commissions; but you must easily see that, in the present crisis, it must be productive of other bad consequences, which you would yourself think of more importance. God knows what the result of it will be. The present situation is sufficiently embarrassing; but if it turns out ill, all sense of personal incovenience, mortification, or disappointment, will, I fear, be lost in considerations of infinitely greater moment. At present, however, there is, I believe, unquestionably no danger; but I cannot divest myself of the persuasion that these are only the symptoms of some disorder lurking in his constitution, and which he has not sufficient strength of habit to throw out. I need not say that you may depend upon hearing from me as often as I hear anything authentic as to his situation, and that if I do not write constantly, it will only be because I have nothing new to communicate on which I can at all depend.

There are no fresh accounts from the Bannat. The troops of Denmark, acting in Sweden, had agreed on the 10th to a suspension of hostilities for eight days, and there seemed reason to hope that this period would be prolonged. They had passed

the Gothelba on which Gothenburg stands, but had retreated again beyond it.

27th.—I have heard no further account of the King. The story which you will see in the papers about Lord Holland, is, I believe, utterly unfounded. I have found the list of the deeds, &c., contained in the iron chest. Camplin says that Colonel Nugent has two duplicates of it. I have therefore directed him to send the list itself over to you by this day's post. You will see that Lord G. B.'s renunciation deed is not mentioned in the list; and Camplin, who made the list, says he never heard of it.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

The letters that follow, depict the distressing anxieties which, day by day, throughout this painful interval, attended the progress of the fatal malady.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall,
Nov. 5th, 1788, Five o'clock.

My dear Brother,

I have delayed till this hour writing to you to-day, as I have nothing of any consequence to write about, excepting the King's health; and I wished to send you the account which I have just received from Pitt, and which I now enclose. The general alarm on the subject is very great, and it is impossible not to feel that so long an illness without much amendment, if any on the whole, and without coming to any crisis, has a most serious appearance. You may naturally conceive the exultation, not wearing even the appearance of disguise, which there is in one party, and the depression of those who belong to the other. I think some

few days more must now decide the point, not, perhaps, by the blow actually happening within that time, which I trust there can be no reason to fear, but by showing whether he has strength sufficient in his constitution to throw out the disorder which is evidently lurking in it, and which will otherwise infallibly destroy it by no very slow degrees.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 7th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I waited yesterday before I wrote to you, in the hopes of seeing Pitt, who had promised to call upon me, and carry me to the place where we were to dine; but he was delayed by a visit from the Chancellor so long, that I found myself too late for the post.

I sincerely wish that I had better news to communicate to you; but I believe you must consider the thing as completely over. The King has now been two days entirely delirious, and during part of the time has been thought to be in the most imminent danger. It now appears that Warren, Heberden and Sir G. Baker, who are the three physicians who attend him, profess themselves unable to decide whether the disorder is or is not of such a nature as may soon produce a crisis which may lead either to health or death. The other alternative is one to which one cannot look without horror—that of a continuance of the present derangement of his faculties, without any other effect upon his health. He is certainly at present stronger in body than he has been, but I understand with much fever. I believe the general idea of his danger is now very prevalent; but we endeavour (I know not with what success) to keep these particulars as much as we can from the public. I have ventured to write

this and a former letter by the post, because you do not seem to have entertained any apprehensions that, under the sort of precautions which I take in sealing, &c., this mode is unsafe; and I think they are such as must have enabled you to detect any improper tricks being played. The sending a messenger would give so much alarm, that I thought it much better to avoid it. If the event happens, which there is now so much reason to dread, it is possible that I may have much to write to you, and I should not then have the same confidence in the post. For this reason I have enclosed a paper, of which you know the use. It is a transcript of what you left with me, which I have been prevented sending you before, and cannot send now. Bernard can supply it in a temporary manner with pasteboard.

Fox is not yet returned, nor have we as yet any ground for judging of the immediate measures which would be taken, beyond those which result from former conduct and language.

Since I wrote the above, I understand that Lord Sydney sends off a messenger. Lest, however, there should be any mistake in this, I send this letter by the post. The enclosure I will send by the messenger.

I received your letter of the 3rd this morning. You may easily conceive that I cannot now enter into the particulars of it. I will only say that, with regard to the papers, I am persuaded that, if you yourself have an opportunity of conversing with M. (as is perhaps too probable), there will be no difficulty in anything which you desire.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

There is one point on which I much wish for your answer, with as little delay as possible. Suppose an immediate dissolution, and an opposition started in Bucks—as will certainly be the case, either for one or both members—would you have me stand? I mention this, because the delay may be decisive.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Nov. 7th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have written to you by this day's post, and now take the opportunity of Lord Sydney's messenger. I am afraid that it would be very sanguine indeed to say that there is even *any* hope that the King will recover both his health and his understanding, though the physicians do not say that it is absolutely impossible for his disorder to have a crisis which may produce such an effect. His disease is now almost entirely confined to his brain. He has all along had an agitation of spirits, which has been gradually increasing; and for these two days he has been quite delirious. It is apprehended that this is the effect either of water on the brain, or of an ossification of the membrane. If it is only an humour checked, it is still possible that he might throw it out by some violent crisis, such as either to destroy him, or entirely to restore him. But this, I again repeat, there seems little reason to hope.

If his indisposition of mind continues, without some more material bodily illness, he may live years in this melancholy state; and this, of all events that can happen, is perhaps the most to be feared. He was, however, thought yesterday to be in imminent danger of death. Should this not happen, but the other, it seems generally agreed that the Prince of Wales must be appointed Regent, with kingly power.

We have no grounds on which to judge of our own situation, except from such conjectures as you are equally able to form on the grounds of the P.'s former conduct and language.

He sent yesterday for Thurlow to Windsor; and about half an hour ago, Pitt received a note from the Chancellor, who is returned to town, saying that the P. had commanded him to

desire Pitt's attendance at Windsor to-morrow morning at eleven.

Pitt is gone to call upon the Chancellor, to learn the nature of his conversation of yesterday. We understood that the object of his going down yesterday was only that he might be consulted as to the steps that might safely be taken with the King in his present unhappy situation. The message of to-day looks like something more, though it seems too early for any negotiation, even if other considerations made that probable.

Fox is out of England, but has, as we understand, been sent for. It appears a great question whether they will offer any negotiation, or, if they do, what measures ought to be pursued. I think the opinions rather lean to the idea that Pitt cannot at once decline all negotiation, but that he will be sufficiently grounded in refusing to listen to any proposal that shall not leave him in his present situation, from whence he cannot be removed without disgrace and degradation.

I need not say, that I am very desirous of knowing your sentiments on the possible circumstances that may arise out of this melancholy event, and that without them, I shall enter into no engagements with a view to any new Government.

* * * * *

As these events may possibly produce much interesting discussion, which I should be unwilling to trust to the post, I have enclosed a transcript of our cypher, not having got a duplicate. It can easily be made for present use either with paper or pasteboard.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

My own persuasion is, that they will not attempt to negotiate at all, but turn us all out at once, which I am sure is the thing we ought most to wish. I trust I am not mistaken in

the confidence that you wish, in this, or indeed any other course that this situation may give rise to, that I should act in the fullest concert with Pitt; whom, indeed, I could not desert without the most despicable ingratitude.

MR. NEVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanlake, Nov. 7th, 1788.

My dearest Lord B.,

I have but one moment, before the post goes out, to tell you that I am this instant returned from Windsor; and find from the best authority that the King's life is unfortunately despaired of. Warren, Heberden, Baker, and Reynolds are attending. I believe the fever has settled on the brain, as there is much delirium. The Chancellor was at Windsor last night, and all the Princes of the Blood are sitting up in the next room to him. The Queen has had fits, but is better to-day.

Doubtless your situation will enable you to hear sooner and more authentically, but I could not avoid giving you myself this lamentable detail.

The Prince seems frightened, and was blooded yesterday.

Kate undertook to write in my name to Hester, instead of you and Lady B. I sincerely condole with her, and hope soon to hear a better account of her.

Ever yours most affectionately,

R. A. Neville.

LORD SYDNEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

(Most Private.) Whitehall, Nov. 7th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

It is with the utmost concern and mortification that I am under the necessity of acquainting your Excellency of the dangerous state in which His Majesty's health has been for

these last two days. Notwithstanding the various reports which you may have seen, real symptoms of danger did not appear till yesterday. The disorder, about the middle of yesterday, attacked His Majesty's head, and he has had a very indifferent night, and, I am afraid, is not much better to-day.

The Queen supports herself with her usual good sense and fortitude, but is still much affected both in health and spirits, though tolerably composed.

His Majesty, during his whole illness, has had the consolation of receiving the unremitted attention of the whole Royal Family, of the value of which he has shown himself affectingly sensible.

In short, my dear Lord, the case may not be desperate; but it is full of extreme danger. God send us a happy issue of it.

My best respects to Lady Buckingham and Lord Temple. I write, as you may imagine, in great confusion and anxiety.

I am, with great esteem and regard,

Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 8th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I am afraid that I shall be obliged to send this letter away without any particular or authentic account of the King. Pitt is gone down to Windsor this morning, and is not yet returned; unless he comes back before the post goes out I shall have little more than common report to send you.

I understand the immediate object of the Prince's desiring to see him, was to inquire about a paper which the Queen imagined the King had put into Pitt's hands respecting an arrangement for the younger part of his family; but Pitt has no such paper.

The latest authentic account I have seen, was a note which

Pitt received from Sir G. Baker, about nine yesterday evening, and which was, therefore, probably written about six or seven. He then says that the King appeared better in his health, but that there seemed reason to fear that his delirium would be permanent. And this, I am sure, you will agree with me in thinking the worst thing than can happen.

Since that, the idea is, as far as I can collect from a variety of different reports, that his fever was considerably increased afterwards, and that between two and four this morning he was in the utmost danger, but that he is since better. One account adds, but I am afraid to give credit to it, that he was relieved by the bursting of a swelling on one of his legs, and by a very great discharge from it. Some crisis of that sort is unquestionably the only thing to which we can look with any reasonable ground of hope for the recovery both of his health and of his faculties. But this very consideration makes me very backward in giving credit to this report, unless it had more foundation than any which I can trace for it.

In the event which Sir George Baker's note gives reason to apprehend, there will be the greatest embarrassment as to the mode in which it is possible to proceed to any appointment of a Regent. The Parliament is now prorogued only till the 23rd instant, and must meet at that time, because no person but the King has authority to prorogue it further. But, as you well know, Parliament cannot proceed to business without the session being opened by the King, or by some Commission authorized by him. No Regent can be appointed or authorized to exercise acts of royal authority but by Act of Parliament; nor can any such Act be valid and binding in law without the King's consent.

The Revolution affords the only thing like a precedent even for the principles on which we can proceed; and yet that is a case widely different from the present, because then the person possessed of the right was declared either to have abdicated

that right, or forfeited it, or both. Here the King may not live many years under an incapacity of exercising the right, and yet may afterwards be restored to his faculties.

It is a heavy calamity that is inflicted upon us in any case except that of his perfect recovery; but in the event which there seems most ground to fear, it may give rise to serious and difficult questions, such as cannot even be discussed without shaking the security and tranquillity of the country.

I am obliged to close this letter without any more information.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 9th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I am much concerned that I was obliged to send off my letter yesterday evening, and the rather as there will be no opportunity of sending this till to-morrow. I find that there was not the least foundation for any part of the reports which I mentioned to you.

Pitt came back last night. He said the physicians do not apprehend present danger, but that their fear is that the insanity will be permanent, but they will not pronounce anything yet. The Prince had a long conversation with him relating to the King's situation, but nothing from which he could collect what he thought of doing in the two cases that may arise. The general notion is, that he will try to negotiate with Pitt from the fear of his popularity; but I do not think it probable. He treated Pitt with civility, but nothing more.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Sunday, Nov. 9th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

There was no truth in any of the reports which I mentioned to you in my letter by the post yesterday. Pitt came back to town last night about nine, and afterwards called here. He had seen all the physicians, and had much conversation with them. They seemed still unwilling, or unable, to decide as to the nature of his disorder; but Warren appeared to incline to the opinion of an ossification. They told him that they had determined, as an experiment, to give the King medicines to remove his fever, in order to observe whether this produced any effect on the state of his mind, and to draw an inference from that whether the disorder on his brain was connected with the fever. They accordingly gave him two doses of James's powder in the course of the day, but without any other effect than lowering his pulse; and this morning we have the severe mortification of hearing that a third dose has operated by a profuse perspiration, so as almost entirely to remove the fever, but that the state of his mind continues unaltered. The physicians, however, all agree that it must still be at least a fortnight before they can venture even to pronounce that it is a disorder of the brain. That even in that case they can give no further opinion; that disorders of that sort are of all others those that are least understood; and that this may continue for many years, or may suddenly leave him, or as suddenly kill him.

I need not tell you the effect which this dreadful calamity produces. Pitt had yesterday a long conference with the Prince; but it turned chiefly on the situation of the King, and the state and progress of his disorder. Nothing passed from which any conclusion can be drawn with respect to future measures. He treated him with civility, but nothing more.

The general idea is that *they* mean to try a negotiation. But whether the Prince means that, and whether Pitt ought in any case to listen to it at all, or in what degree, are questions which it is difficult indeed to decide. There could never be a more favourable moment for Pitt's leaving the Government, with a view to his own credit and character. But then, on the other hand, his own personal situation must be so embarrassed: there is so much danger of an imputation of pride, and a factious desire of keeping alive differences, that my opinions fluctuate almost from hour to hour. I am still, however, inclined to believe that they will not make the experiment, though the conversation upon it, and the general persuasion of its being intended, make it more difficult for them to avoid doing something of that sort.

The present idea is, to let Parliament meet on the 23rd, because, indeed, no one has authority to prorogue it further. That then it should be stated to them—supposing things to continue in their present unhappy state—that the King's health has not admitted either of his proroguing them, or of his signing a Commission to open the session, and, therefore, to propose that they should adjourn. As soon as the physicians feel themselves able to pronounce it a disorder seated on the brain, they must be examined before the Council, and the circumstance stated to Parliament, and a Bill brought in to enable the Prince of Wales to act as Regent. It seems a great doubt whether any, and what limitations ought to be proposed. Those under which the King was authorized to appoint a Regent, in case of minority, appear too great; nor, indeed, would it as I conceive be possible, in the present state of things, to carry on such a Government. The great object to be looked to, seems to be the keeping the Government in such a state as that if the King's health should be restored he might be, as far as possible, enabled to resume it, and to conduct it in such a manner as he might judge best.

I suppose there never was a situation in which any set of men ever had, at once, so many points to decide, so essentially affecting their own honour, character, and future situation, their duty to their country in a most critical situation, and their duty to their unhappy master, to whom they are unquestionably bound by ties of gratitude and honour, independent of considerations of public duty towards him. I hope God, who has been pleased to afflict us with this severe and heavy trial, will enable us to go through it honestly, conscientiously, and in a manner not dishonourable to our characters.

God bless you, my dear brother. Nothing would be such a satisfaction to me as to be able to talk all this over with you, instead of this slow and imperfect communication.

I found that Bernard was still in town, and have therefore desired him to stay, because I thought he could be of little use to me, and that all this may take a sudden turn which may make his being on the spot very important.

I send you a letter which I had begun in cypher, that you may see how far you can make it out. In going it over, which you will observe I was doing, I observe a few mistakes, but not, I think, such as would materially embarrass you.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 10th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

I have nothing of any consequence to add to the account which I sent you yesterday by Lord Sydney's messenger. Pitt is gone down to Windsor this morning, but will probably not be back before the post goes out. The account of this morning is, that the King has slept well last night, but is in other respects much the same.

The last, which is a material part, shows that we have little to hope from the effect of the medicines with respect to the state of his mind; the consequence must be such as I mentioned to you in my last. If Pitt makes offers to Fox, his situation may be very difficult; but I think he should hold off as much as he can.

Pray let me know your opinion on that point, and on the various others which are connected with it. I hope I may depend on these letters not being seen by *any* person. I have a real confidence in Fitzherbert's honour; but I should not write with the same freedom if I thought even he saw what I may have to write.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanlake, Tuesday, Nov. 11th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

It was my intention to have left this place yesterday for Baronhill, but the most natural and justifiable anxiety keeps me here until Thursday or Friday. We have been at Windsor the last three mornings, and sorry am I to tell you that poor Rex's state seems worse than a thousand deaths; for unless God interposes by some miracle, there is every appearance of his living with the loss of his intellects. Yesterday the fever, which had raged the day before, was abated; but the lucid intervals were few, and lasted a very short time. I saw the General, who was exceedingly guarded, as they all are who really love poor Rex; the real state, however, of his melancholy condition seems now to have transpired, and my letters from London are full of the greatest consternation. The Queen sees nobody but Lady Constance, Lady Charlotte Finch, Miss Burney, and her two sons, who, I am afraid, do not announce

the state of the King's health with that caution and delicacy which should be observed to the wife and the mother, and it is to them only that she looks up. I understand her behaviour is very feeling, decent, and proper. The Prince has taken the command at Windsor, in consequence of which there is *no command whatsoever;* and it was not till yesterday that orders were given to two grooms of the bedchamber to wait for the future and receive the inquiries of the numbers who inquire; nor would this have been done, if Pitt and Lord Sydney had not come down in person to beg that such orders might be given. Unless it was done yesterday, no orders have been given for prayers in the churches, nor for the observance of other forms, such as stopping the playhouses, &c., highly proper at such a juncture. What the consequences of this heavy misfortune will be to Government, you are more likely to know than I am; but I cannot help thinking that the Prince will find a greater difficulty in making a sweep of the present Ministry, in his quality of Fiduciary Regent, than in that of King. The Stocks are already fallen 2 per cent, and the alarms of the people of London are very little flattering to the Prince. I am told messenger after messenger has been sent for Fox, who is touring with Mrs. Armstead on the continent; but I have not heard whether the Prince has sent for him, or given any orders to Fox's friends to that effect. The system of favouritism is much changed since Lord Bute's and the Princess-Dowager's time, for Jack Payne, Master Leigh, an Eton schoolboy, and Master Barry, brother to Lord Barrymore, and Mrs. Fitz, form the Cabinet at Carlton House.

I am, my dear Lord,

Sincerely yours,

B.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 11th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

The account of to-day is in every particular exactly the same with that of yesterday. The disorder in the brain is increased. The Cabinet is to meet on Thursday, to receive the report of the physicians; a Privy Council will be called for Monday or Tuesday.

Parliament must meet on Thursday sevennight, to which day it now stands prorogued; and it will then, I imagine, adjourn itself. I wait with impatience to hear from you. I am called off, and prevented from writing any more.

Ever yours,

W. W. G.

MR. NEVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Windsor Castle,
Wednesday, Nov. 11th, Four o'clock, 1788.

The King had more sleep last night than the night before; but is in other respects the same as before. I fear there is very little hope of amendment, as he has no fever, and his pulse and appetite are as good as ever. The King had some lucid intervals this morning, conversing with great composure with a page, whom he recollected but to have seen since his illness; and he also mentioned his son, Prince Augustus, who is going to the South of France. He soon, however, returned to his unfortunate agitation and delirium, in which he still continues. Sad state!

Ever yours affectionately, in haste,

R. A. N.

LORD SYDNEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

(Secret and Separate.) Whitehall, Nov. 13th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

I am not at all surprised that your Excellency should participate in the distress, which every honest man feels upon the present unhappy state of the King's health. The account, however, of this morning is rather more favourable than those of some days past; though certainly not such as to lay any part of our anxiety at rest. There does not, however, appear any symptoms which seem to threaten His Majesty's life with immediate danger. He had more fever yesterday than for some days past, but since it has subsided, he has been in a state of more composure than before.

The Parliament will meet this day sevennight, and adjourn; if in the intermediate time there should not be an opportunity of receiving His Majesty's pleasure for a prorogation.

You may easily believe that the hurry and ferment is great at present. People in general, of all ranks, seem to be truly sensible of the calamitous effects to be dreaded from an unfavourable termination of His Majesty's disorder. But, as you may easily imagine, there are not wanting those who are thinking of extracting *good* to *themselves* out of this misfortune; nor are they over anxious to conceal their eagerness to accomplish their ends. I am old enough to have been in the scene on a demise of the Crown, an event which does not bring the virtues of men more into light than the contrary qualities. I do not promise myself a more agreeable picture of mankind, than one which I have never thought of but with disgust and detestation.

I refer your Excellency to my official despatch for the business which has passed in a Committee of the Privy Council to-day, on the subject of a prayer. The Dissenters and the

Jews have begun upon that subject already. Indeed every demonstration of alarm and affection has been shown through the whole town, and, as far as can be learned, in all parts of the country.

I am, with the truest esteem and regard, my dear Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant,

SYDNEY.

The next letter from Mr. Grenville is of special importance; he lays down the whole plan of the Ministry in reference to the proposed Regency, developing and investigating the arguments with remarkable clearness and penetration.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 13th, 1788.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your messenger has performed his journey with uncommon expedition, and brought me your letters at a little after eleven this morning. The account of to-day is, I think, more favourable than that of the two preceding days. The King had last night a strong return of his fever, which left him this morning more composed than he has been for several days. Warren's account adds that he even "understood questions that were put to him, though he soon relapsed into his former inconsistency." The material part of this, I think, is that it proves him never to have been without fever, though it has been kept under, and therefore affords ground still to hope for such a crisis as may end this scene, either by his death or by his total recovery. And there can be no doubt that even, for his sake, either of those alternatives is preferable to his continuing in his present situation, though with the possibility of recovering his reason by intervals.

This circumstance affords an additional and strong reason for delaying as long as possible the taking any decisive steps for providing for carrying on the Government under the present circumstances. It is intended to meet Parliament on the 20th, and circular letters are to be sent to-day to all the members, notifying the probability of this. But, as things now stand, Pitt means immediately to propose to them to adjourn; and it is most likely that this will meet with no opposition, especially as Fox cannot be in town by that time.

If the present circumstances should still continue, Pitt means to propose a Bill, declaring the Prince of Wales Regent, or Guardian, to exercise the King's authority during his illness, but in the King's name only. We have, I think, not yet entirely made up our minds as to the degree of power and authority which it will be right to put into his hands for that purpose. That it cannot be necessary to invest him with the whole regal authority, is, I think, quite evident; and we owe it to the King, both as public men professing allegiance to him, and as individuals bound to him by many ties of gratitude and honour, to take whatever steps we can with propriety to preserve to him, in case of his recovery, not merely his legal rights, of which he cannot be deprived, but also the political means of exercising those rights according to the opinions which he entertains both of public men and public measures. And to this extent I am inclined to hope that the general opinion will bear us out; but we must be extremely cautious that we do nothing which shall bear in the public estimation the appearance of wishing to establish ourselves under this pretence in the continuance of our power in opposition to the Prince of Wales, in whom we are to propose the supreme authority to be vested. All the precedents, as far as they apply to this case, would justify the appointment of a Council of Regency, to be named by Parliament, by the majority of which the Regent would be bound. And I think it is not clear that

in all events we shall not be obliged, by the strong analogy to be drawn from some of those cases, to provide some such Council. But it seems now to be agreed that we ought not to propose their being named by Parliament, because that would be in effect to propose that the executive authority should be vested by Parliament in our hands, instead of those of the Prince of Wales. Such a proposition would be difficult to carry, and might be seen by the public in such a light as materially and permanently to affect our characters. Besides this, what is more important even than these considerations, is, that on the fullest consideration, we are persuaded such a proposal ought not to be made, and would, if carried, be injurious to the country. Examine the provisions of the last Regency Bill, and you will, I think, be convinced that the present Government, being joined in such a Council with the Prince of Wales and the Royal Family, could produce nothing but discord, confusion and anarchy; and that on such a plan the administration of public affairs cannot proceed.

This line of argument leads to the nomination of the Prince of Wales, either without a Council, or with a Council, consisting only of the Cabinet Ministers for the time being, and removable by him, limiting at the same time his authority in other respects in such a manner as may not be inconsistent with the means of carrying on a temporary Government; but may provide in the manner I have already mentioned for securing to the King, in case of his recovery, the possession and exercise of his rights, such as he enjoyed them before his illness. The means of doing this appear to be the restraining the Prince from granting any office or pension for life, or in reversion, except those only which must by law be granted either for life, or during good behaviour; restraining him from creating or advancing peers, and, perhaps, from dissolving the present or any future Parliament. The last of these points appear to be that which admits of most doubt, whether it should be stated to the extent which I have men-

tioned, or whether it should be confined to this Parliament, or should be entirely omitted. My own opinion, I think, rather leans to inserting it in its full extent, though I see and confess that there are weighty objections to it.

I have now mentioned to you all I know of our views and intentions on this most important subject. The next point relates to our own situation. We have no knowledge at all, any more than when I wrote to you before, of the Prince of Wales's intentions, nor has any overture, direct or indirect, been made to Mr. Pitt. This circumstance, joined to the affectation with which Sheridan appears to be consulted on all occasions, seems sufficiently to indicate what is to be expected. A part of this, however, is to be attributed to Sheridan's eagerness to display his personal importance, by which silly vanity I am told he has much offended the Duke of Portland and Fox's immediate friends.

We are therefore still much in doubt whether there is any idea of proposing terms of junction. We are all agreed that the most desirable thing would be, that Pitt should be removed at once, and without management. The difficulties of a real *bonâ fide* junction appear insuperable, and in anything short of that, duplicity and dishonesty might give them advantages which, though we should not certainly envy, yet we might have much cause to lament. There is, however, one circumstance arising from the present state of things which, if that should continue, will, I think, afford a clear and distinct line for us to follow. The King's illness being such as it is now described to be, it is not only possible, but much the most probable event, that he will at some period be restored to the use of his reason, either permanently, or during intervals of considerable length. Under this impression, it seems impossible for us for a moment to entertain proposals which might involve us in contradictory obligations, and our acceptance of which might be not only injurious to the King's feelings, which we are so much bound

to consult, but even prejudicial to the state of his mind. Suppose him to awake out of the sort of dream, in which he now is, and to find that Pitt had, by his own consent and his own act, brought into his Government those very men whom he was pledged to him to keep at a distance from it; suppose the King's aversion and dislike to those men, so justly founded as it is, to remain in full force and vigour. What then is Pitt to do? Is he to separate himself from people whom he has joined on the promise of mutual good faith and confidence, or is he to abandon the King in the very point to which he has pledged him, and on which he has always received from him a full and unequivocal support? Besides the difficulties in which Pitt would thus find himself involved, must not the very idea of such a situation striking the King's imagination at the first moments of his recovery, and agitating him in the same manner as these very situations have done before, drive him back into his former state, and render all further hopes of recovery desperate and impossible?

This consideration I think unanswerable, and have no doubt that it will continue to be so felt. In the case, therefore, of a Regency, all proposals of junction will instantly be negatived as inconsistent with our duty to the King. In the case of a demise, which there is to-day more reason to think probable than there has been for several days past, we shall feel ourselves considerably embarrassed. I put the idea of a *bonâ fide* junction, as I have already said, wholly out of the question, being persuaded that the thing is impossible, and that our opponents will never seriously intend it. Their proposals, if any are made, will, I am convinced, have no other object than that perhaps of satisfying the Prince of Wales, if your information respecting him is well grounded, and of lessening the odium of Pitt's removal in the eyes of the public, and holding him out as a haughty and impracticable character. Against this he must defend himself as well as he can, but the whole will, I am per-

suaded, be nothing more than a match at fencing; and the guard which I mentioned to you before, of insisting on his present situation, seems as good a one as any other. I have delivered to him your letter, and shown him that which you wrote to me. He has desired me to say that he will, if possible, write a few words to you by this messenger, but if he should find that quite impossible, without delaying him, he has begged me to express how strongly he feels your kind and affectionate conduct towards him.

His popularity was never greater than in the present moment, and if the Prince should be so ill-advised as to dismiss him, it is probable that the current will run at least as strongly in his favour as it did in his father's.

I have written you a dissertation rather than a letter, but I know the desire which you must feel to be as fully informed as possible, not only of facts, but also of opinions and intentions. I need not mention to you how confidential every part of this letter is, but particularly that part which respects our intentions as to the settlement of a Regency; because we conceive it of the utmost importance, though these and many other ideas are floating in the public, to keep our enemies as ignorant as we can of our real intentions in this respect.

Of the different questions which you have stated respecting Ireland, in the case of a demise, you will certainly be much better able to judge than I am; but I cannot help wishing you to look into the Act of Settlement in Queen Anne's time, and to consider whether that does not provide for the continuance of Irish officers, civil and military, as well as English.

In the case of a Regency, my idea is that as soon as the King's illness is communicated to Parliament here, which will not be till after the adjournment, directions should be given to the Lord-Lieutenant and Council of Ireland to assemble the two Houses by special summons; and that our Bill, whatever it is, should be communicated to them in a speech from the Lord-

Lieutenant, and should be passed *verbatim* in the Irish Parliament. Some opinions here seem to doubt the necessity of this; there has, however, been very little discussion upon it.

You will easily see the impossibility of doing anything about your commissions, which must share the fate of many others in England. I much fear that Tompkins's office at Chelsea will stand in this predicament. The form is, that a recommendation goes from this office to the Secretary of State, who takes the King's pleasure upon it. The first step has been taken, but the latter has been impossible. If my successor is a gentleman, he will confirm the appointment; but the chances are so much against that, that I almost despair.

Adieu, my dear brother.

Believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

I had written before your messenger arrived a long letter in cypher, which this opportunity of writing will save you the labour of decyphering. In case, however, we should want to use the cypher any more, pray add the following names: 5, Sheridan; 6, Duke of Portland; 7, First Lord of the Treasury.

MR. W. W. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Nov. 14th, 1788.

My dear Brother,

By a cursed blunder of Lord Sydney's messenger, he went away last night without calling for my letter. Lord Sydney sends another man to-day; but I have resolved to keep him till I can send you this morning's account. That of yesterday evening was, I think, in so far favourable, as it clearly shows that the King is no longer in that settled state of derangement

without other disease, which was most to be apprehended, but that his disorder is taking some turn, and whatever that may ultimately be, it must be far more desirable than the continuance of his former state. I am assured, that it was last night the opinion of medical people, that the turn which seemed probable was one from which it was not too sanguine to hope the best effects. I do not, however, indulge this idea too far.

I mentioned yesterday, to Mornington, your kind intentions towards him. He will write to you, to explain his situation fully.

Pitt is gone down this morning to Windsor.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W. G.

You will be, perhaps, surprised to hear that Pitt has received a very handsome letter from Lord Chesterfield, dated from Weymouth, stating the alarm there for the King's life; and desiring Pitt to do him the justice of believing him in that and every other contingency, sincerely and personally attached to him. I am not without hopes, that this may be improved into a decided support of your interest in case of a contest; but you well know the difficulties with which this would be attended.

I have just received the copy of the paper sent to St. James's, which is by no means such as one could wish it. I wait for a more particular account before I send this off.

* * * * *

One o'clock.

I now send off the messenger, though with little more intelligence than before; but this is all I can get till Pitt returns from Windsor, which may not be till late at night.

Here is Lord Mornington's letter, alluded to by Mr. Grenville.

LORD MORNINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Hertford Street, Nov. 15th, 1788.

My dear Lord,

Grenville has informed me of a new and most flattering instance of your regard for me; you may well conceive how sensibly I feel the value of the offer of a seat from you, in the event of Grenville's failure in the county; and I should certainly at once throw myself on the chance of his success, (which, I trust, cannot be doubtful), if I did not feel it to be my duty to strain every nerve in the general cause, and to the utmost extent of my ability to increase our numbers in the House of Commons, by purchasing a seat for myself.

If the King should remain in his present unhappy state of mind, and the Parliament be either dissolved, or expire by its natural death under the government of a Regent, I shall think myself, under those circumstances, bound, by my respect for the person who placed me at Windsor, to endeavour to preserve that seat for him; that he may find his own friends, where he was pleased to leave them, whenever he may happen to recover his reason. But I might fail in this attempt to maintain the trust reposed in me, and the expense of the attempt might be such as to disable me from purchasing any other seat; in that case your offer would be most acceptable.

My brother Pole has found an opening in a borough, long the property of Anderson Pelham (Grimsby); and there is every reason to suppose, indeed I think it certain, that Pitt, in any event, will have two seats at that place at the general election for about £5000. My brother is able to advance £1000 of this money, and I mean to give him £1500, which will bring him in; another friend of Pitt's agrees to pay the remaining money for the other seat. By these means, as far as I am able, I have secured a vote which will count as well as mine, what-

ever misfortune may befal me. It has, however, been necessary to take immediate steps for the attainment of this object; and my brother and Mr. Wood are to be at Grimsby on Monday next. Now, if any sudden stroke should produce a dissolution of Parliament (which is possible), I might find myself unable, from the shortness of the notice, to raise a larger sum than the £1500 necessary for my brother's election. In this case also, your offer would afford me a most desirable resource.

You will perceive that I have stated to you the whole of my situation openly, and without reserve; and you will, I am persuaded, understand that I should gladly embrace any occasion of uniting more closely my political fortunes with your protection; but I think you will agree, that it is my duty to endeavour in the first instance to strengthen the general cause in which we are all embarked, and the support of which at this moment presses most strongly on every feeling of public and private honour, and affection.

Grenville has given you (I suppose) to-day the improved accounts of the King's health; I really think them very encouraging, and it seems to be the general opinion.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Your most obliged and affectionate friend,

MORNINGTON.

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